



Islam vs. superstition

Abu Abdelazeez

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious.

Foreword

Islam is built upon rationality, i.e., reason. Throughout Islamic history, numerous discussions have taken place regarding the issue of metaphysics (al-ghayb). The different approaches laid the foundations of different schools of thought on worldviews (al-'aqa'id).

The Muslims placed themselves in different parts of the scale between a rational and a superstitious camp. Some denied well-established ideas contained in the Islamic texts, while others read the texts through a superstitious lens. Both approaches are problematic.

The outcome was that despite Islam eradicating some superstitions, other superstitions became deeply rooted and Islamized, which to this day has different levels of influence on the life of Muslims; from none to a massive influence. It's hard to include all superstitious ideas since superstition has many manifestations, so I've chosen to treat the topics fundamentally and to cover the most common examples.

The topics in this book might be very sensitive to some people, due to their understanding of them as being a part of Islam, which they've been taught since their early childhood so they might perceive the treatment of these ideas as an assault on Islam. But there isn't a place in Islam for clinging on to opinions based on emotions, dogmas, and mudslinging. We are required to be sincere in our search for the truth and always be willing to throw away erroneous ideas and follow arguments instead, since clinging on to the dogmas of one's forefathers is criticized immensely in the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ says:

وَكَذَلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ، قَالَ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِأَهْدَىٰ مِمَّا وَجَدْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَكُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ
فَانتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ، فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ

“And thus, We did not send before you any warner in a town, but those who led easy lives in it said: Surely we found our fathers on a course, and surely we are followers of their footsteps. (The warner) Said: What! Even if I bring you a better guide than that on which you found your fathers? They said: Surely, we are unbelievers in that with which you are sent. So, We inflicted retribution on them, then see how was the end of the rejecters.” (43:23-25)

The criticism against blindly following one’s forefathers is evident in this verse and also in the following verse:

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَفَاءَنَا آبَاؤُنَا أَوْ لَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ

“And when it is said to them: ‘Follow what Allah has revealed,’ they say: ‘Nay! We follow what we found our fathers upon.’ What! Even though their fathers had no sense at all, nor did they follow the right way.” (2:170)

The topics in this book aren’t part of the core ideas of Islam, i.e., they aren’t part of *usul ud-deen* or the pillars of faith. Nor is guidance and deviance determined by them. The topics are secondary and not related to being a good or bad Muslim, nor being guided or misguided.

The primary motivation for writing this book is a sincere quest for finding the truth. The topics might, however, have an implication for the practical lives of people, which made it hard not addressing the issues.

Some of the consequences of superstition and myths are that a lot of people are financially deceived, become depressed, leaves the practicing of Islam, become resentful towards Islam, and some even leave Islam altogether. Others find that the consequences of superstition give rise to a lack of self-awareness and a lack of taking responsibility regarding one’s flaws and actions, since they end up placing the guilt on hidden factors – even without realizing it. Superstition can be exploited by cult-like and cults; healers, preachers, and people who can help one allegedly have special supernatural powers are thus given a special status.

Michael Shermer explains some of the characteristics of cults in his book titled 'Why People Believe Weird Things':

- Exaltation of the leader: Glorification of the leader like if he was a Saint or divine.
- The infallibility of the leader: A belief which in practice entails that the leader can't make mistakes, even though the possibility does exist in theory.
- The omniscience of the leader: Acceptance of the opinions and statements of the leader on various topics ranging from philosophical to trivial subjects.
- Techniques of persuasion: Methods; ranging from benign to characterized by coercion employed to recruit new followers and root present opinions.
- Hidden agendas: The actual ideas and plans of the group are blurred or not revealed in front of new members and the public.
- Deception: Recruits and followers aren't informed about everything, as they should, about the leader and the inner circle of the group, especially mistakes and embarrassing incidents or circumstances are covered and concealed.
- Economic or sexual exploitation: Recruits and followers are persuaded to invest money and other assets in the group, and the leader might engage in sexual relations with one or multiple of the followers.
- Absolute truth: A belief in the leader and/or the group has discovered the absolute truth about many subjects.
- Absolute morals: A confidence in the leader and/or in the group has developed a system of correct and incorrect ideas which applies to members and non-members on equal terms. Those who strictly adhere to the moral codex become and stays members, whereas those who don't are rejected or punished.

Sectarian Muslim groups can, strictly speaking, act like a cult without utilizing superstition. It's not a pre-requisite that a cult should exploit superstition for it to be a cult, however, it is prevalent, since it justifies the special status of the cult leader for the members of the cult due to special supernatural abilities.

On a societal level, superstition serves as a distraction from the regimes; instead of blaming the policies for the horrendous consequences in society the blame is placed on superstitious phenomena. Therefore, it's hardly a surprise, that some regimes have an interest in maintaining superstition in the population and in connecting superstition to the dominating religion or philosophy in society. Consequences due to negligence in the health sector, education system, fraud in the treasury, and a lack of development in areas pertaining to policies can be explained by resorting to superstitious ideas such as the Evil Eye, magic, evil spirits, etc. by regimes and their supporters.

Such tendencies can blur the gap between superstition and Islam for outsiders as well for Muslims.

The mentioned tendencies are a risk in all religions and philosophies, which is why the clash between secularism and the political exploitation of the Catholic church concentrated reactions with rational, scientific, and unfortunately also emotional characteristics against the tangled mass which religion and superstition can become, in the perception of people.

Despite the adverse reaction some thinkers, including skeptics, succeeded in pointing out some objective measures and some crucial and central problem areas in Christianity, which are also present in the perception of Islam amongst some Muslims. In the before-mentioned book by Shermer, he correctly identified some of the reasons for people being religious and superstitious. For some people religions or superstitious ideas can function as, what he terms *credo consolans*, i.e. that some people are religious or superstitious due to finding comfort in the ideas, their ability to give instant satisfaction, a way to simplify a complex reality, where one is subjected to good and evil, a source of morals and meaning, and something that gives hope. Such reasons don't say anything about the truth value of a religion or an idea, and it might give rise to skeptics wrongfully rejecting the entire religion or philosophy, which the idea, being a doctrine or a superstitious notion, is a part of.

A reaction to something problematic is rarely the correct reaction. Instead, one should undertake investigations and separate the wheat

from the chaff instead of throwing the baby out with the bathwater,
which most skeptics do.

This book is my attempt to clarify, how to separate superstition and
myth from the strong ideas in Islam.

I ask Allah to accept this humble contribution as a good deed on the
Day of Judgement, ameen.

Abu Abdelazeez
Copenhagen, July 2019

Introduction

Religiousness is an integrated part of human nature just as the ability to think is. The natural curiosity in our souls and minds is due to a wish of finding meaning, causal relationships, in everything surrounding us which sometimes leads to a correct explanation, a plausible explanation, and sometimes to a completely wrong explanation.

Since the dawn of time man has sought answers to both existential questions such as:

- What's the purpose of life?
- Where did we come from?
- What is to happen after death?

and to practical questions about different phenomena, where the answers are useful in areas pertaining to optimizing agriculture, maximizing profit, enhancing chances of survival, and development of technology and inventions, etc. serving these purposes.

The mind along with the thinking process, which separates us from and raises us to a level above animals and other sensed creatures, this very mind allows us to misunderstand, imagine things, and reach wrong conclusions. Thus, the mind has the ability to reach correct and incorrect conclusions.

It's through the mind, rational axioms, and the principle of causality, that we conclude, that the world didn't come into being by itself, cause itself, isn't eternal, and that it must be created by something different from everything, that is contained in the universe.

The first man, the Prophet Adam ﷺ, received a simple message of monotheism (tawhid) from Allah ﷻ, which he informed his children about. With time humanity became numerous and diverse pertaining to appearance and languages, and some peoples deviated from the original message.

On the origins of polytheism, Ibn Kathir narrates a story about a monotheistic people. Amongst them, there was a pious man, whom

people wanted to commemorate and celebrate due to his piety. Initially, someone placed a rock or other symbol as a monument. With time, someone built a statue of this pious man, which allowed people to visit and thereby remember him. After some time, smaller statues were made, which could be kept at home since it was more practical than leaving the house and going to a particular place to remember him. After some generations, the respect displayed by the ancestors was transformed into worship, which the new generations performed due to the blind imitation of, what they thought their ancestors used to do. (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*)

Superstition has an entirely different origin; when people can see the effect but can't locate the cause, the principle of causality forces them to insist, that there must be a cause, and after going through their mental lexicon, they choose the best candidate to the cause – sometimes their guess is correct, and sometimes their guess is wrong.

The mental lexicon can contain ideas, which are a result of thinking, incorrect information, or imagination. So, in the particular situation where one is looking for a cause to an effect due to the principle of causality, it is entirely possible that one picks incorrect information or imagination – this is how superstition emerges.

About this book

This book is a translation of the book titled “Islam kontra overtro” originally published in Danish, November 2018. The book is written in the intersection between, what can be termed faith by the one vs. superstition by the other. And in the light of a West-European context, where ideas from east and west meet, the approach in this book is a window into the future at the time writing this since only the durable ideas shall prevail when we are done with our examination. The prevailing ideas shall be based on a solid and unwavering foundation instead of a shaky foundation. I hope that this book will be used as a reference by Muslims in the future, in their discussions with non-Muslims externally, and with Muslims internally to separate the wheat from the chaff. This is why I've tried to write the book in a style that treats the erroneous approaches of both target audiences; (1) those who

believe *too little*, i.e., those who deny ideas, that they shouldn't deny and (2) those who believe in unprovable ideas, i.e., are superstitious.

I've employed both calque translations and somewhat free translations in the book depending on, what I saw fit. I've tried to keep the language as simple as possible due to a broad target audience, which is why there might be paragraphs in the book with very long sentences. Taking space and number of pages into consideration, I've left out chains of narrations, in the cases where the chain of narration isn't discussed. In the cases where the chains are discussed, I've mentioned them.

There might be a difference of opinion amongst scholars concerning the credibility of a narrator. In some cases, I've just settled with including the criticism of a narrator without including anything else, since it is sufficient to point to criticism of narrators in this examination in this book. Therefore, it doesn't count as a rebuttal of the claims found in this book to point towards a scholar who accepted or approved of a narrator, that I mention as being categorized as weak by some scholars. The nature of the topics is essential in this regard.

The literature list includes books that I've referred to in this book and books, I've utilized while writing this book. I apologize if I've left out referencing a book, a lecturer or other communicator of knowledge, whose ideas I've used while writing this book.

The pivot of this book is thoughts and ideas, and not an appeal to authorities, which is why I haven't focused on who said what, but instead, I've focused on, what was said based on what arguments. This is why I haven't filled out the book with quotes; both quotes pro and against the ideas presented in this book. The places where I have mentioned names is due to proper conduct in citation and reference – to credit the authors, whose ideas I've quoted.

About the structure of the book: I've chosen to begin our examination with reality, which all people, rationally speaking, should be able to agree on.

After that, I've chosen to narrow down our examination to superstition regarding the way some Muslims understand Islam, i.e., the superstition

since the text analysis, without doubt, will be informative for them notwithstanding their own level.

Regardless if one is superstitious or in the opposite camp, this book will prove to help attain a clear understanding of Islam, since it, without doubt, will offer an alternative understanding to the one familiar to most people.

For superstitious Muslims, this book will contribute to clearing up a significant number of misunderstandings, which they themselves indeliberately contribute to spreading, since they don't know any alternative understandings.

As for the opposite camp, this book will offer a rational understanding of Islam, which enables them to regain or maybe even for the first time experience a trust in Islam; including a confidence in the Qur'an and Traditions of the Prophet ﷺ (as-sunnah) including the *hadith* literature and science of *hadith*.

Non-Muslims who are considering converting to Islam but have been repelled or deterred from doing so due to superstition being presented as a part of Islamic faith shall now through this book find an acceptable alternative understanding of Islam, enabling them to take the step further and convert.

There is a Facebook group called *Islam vs superstition* which welcomes questions about and opinions on the arguments in the book:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/islam.vs.superstition/>

Alternatively, questions and comments can also be sent to: superstition@al-hidayah.dk

The sensuous reality

Ideas consist of two parts, which one is required to examine before accepting or understanding them:

- 1) The actual reality the idea pertains to.
- 2) A view or information related to the particular reality.

In brief, this means, that in order to grasp an idea, one is required to, first of all, understand what the reality is, and then it becomes possible to attach a particular idea or conclusion to the particular reality.

The reality itself can be clear or blurry and requires, that one examines it through the appropriate method depending on the nature of the reality.

Charles Sander Pierce formulated a classic description of critical thinking in the article titled *The Fixation of Belief* written in 1877. Pierce points out 5 ways of accepting or clinging onto an idea:

1. Stubbornness – to stubbornly cling on to a belief while disregarding facts. The weakest kind of argumentation.
2. Authority – to let one or more persons decide what one should think pertaining to an issue. Not much better than (1)
3. Intuition – a gut feeling one employs to decide the issue. Slightly better than (1) and (2), but highly prone to errors.
4. Experience – to employ empirical knowledge through scientific studies or observations. Appropriately utilized, science can be used to filter imagination from reality.
5. Rationality and logic – The most potent kind of argumentation.

This lineup of the strength of arguments becomes relevant due to studies which show, that there is a high correlation between intuitive thinking and superstition, which according to Stuart Vyse in the book *Believing in magic* might explain, why superstition is more widespread amongst women than amongst men – women make use of intuition to greater extent than men do.

In the following, we shall look into faith and conviction in relation to arguments.

Faith & conviction

Conviction has levels; which can be divided into conclusive and non-conclusive.

If the reality under scrutiny is apparant, then the final conclusion will be conclusive, whereas if the reality under scrutiny is unclear, then the final conclusion will be non-conclusive.

The definitive conclusion related to absolute belief associated with an apparant reality is termed *i'tiqaad* in Arabic language and is defined in the book titled *Kitab at-Ta'rifaat* (The Book of Definitions) by al-Jurjani as:

التصديق الجازم المطابق للواقع عن دليل قطعي

“The conclusive belief (which is) in conformity with reality based on a conclusive proof.”

If the actual reality isn't apparant, or if the conclusion isn't conclusive, then the level of the final conclusion is non-conclusive. This conclusion is also required to be in conformity with reality.

Rational thinking

The rational method of thinking can briefly be explained as requiring four conditions before occurring correctly:

1. A sensuous reality.
2. Previous information about the reality under scrutiny.
3. The ability to sense the reality, either directly or indirectly.
4. A functional brain which is able to connect the sensed reality with the relevant previous information.

The sensuous reality must be able to be sensed by at least one of the five senses. The previous information is attained in some cases through reports by others and in some cases through experience. The previous information is required to be correct for the conclusion to be correct. The ability to sense the reality is fulfilled when the relevant senses

function in a person. The functional brain is required to be functional enough to connect the sense impressions with the corresponding previous information about the particular reality.

An example which illustrates the process: A glass is on a table. The glass is sensuous, and a person has previous information about the object; it's a glass, and the senses transmit the directly sensed sense impressions to the brain, which connects the sense impressions with the relevant previous information.

If the glass weren't sensuous, neither directly or indirectly, then it would be like the situation, when there isn't a glass on the table from the person's perspective according to the rational method of thinking. If our subject had never seen a glass before, didn't know that this object is a glass, didn't have any previous information about glass, didn't have any of the relevant senses, or didn't have a functional brain, which is able to connect the relevant previous information with the sense impressions, i.e., if one of the conditions weren't met, then it would be impossible for a rational conclusion to occur as a result of thinking.

Many conclusions depend on how many and which previous information the subject has about glass:

- It's a glass.
- It's used to drink from.
- The glass is on a table.
- The glass was produced by this or that material.
- The glass was produced by someone.
- Somebody or something placed the glass on the table.

It's an apparant reality, and the previous information related to the glass is correct; therefore, the conclusions are also correct. In this particular case, the conclusions will be conclusive for the subject, and they will reach the level of absolute belief.

Another example is blue and red graffiti on a wall. The graffiti is sensuous, the subject has previous information about spray paint; it's paint, and the senses of the subject transmit the directly sensed sense

impressions to the brain, which connects the sense impressions with the relevant previous information.

If the graffiti weren't sensuous, neither directly or indirectly, then it would be the same as if there wasn't any graffiti on the wall in the perspective of the subject. If the subject had never seen graffiti before, didn't know that it's paint, didn't have any previous information about paint, didn't have any of the relevant senses, or didn't have a functional brain, which is able to connect the relevant previous information with the sense impressions, i.e., if just one of the conditions weren't fulfilled, then it would be impossible for a rational conclusion to occur as a result of thinking.

In the two examples, we are able to reach conclusions based on the principle of causality, cause and effect, which entails the notion of indirect sensing, i.e., due to the principle of causality we can reach conclusions in numerous situations about the cause by sensing the effect.

The principle of causality is a central concept in the thinking process because it enables us to undertake rational assessments without requiring us to sense the cause behind the effect. It's, however, a double-edged sword, because it can also give rise to misjudgments and lead to superstition; by connecting unprovable causes with the sensuous reality.

The scientific study seeks to uncover causal relationships through tests and experiments, and also through extending our indirect sensing through means, which functions as an extension of the senses.

Scientific studies

The scientific study is an extension of the rational method of thinking because it presupposes rational thinking, i.e., it has the same conditions as rational thinking and seeks to uncover the causal relationships in various phenomena through the formation of theories, observation, and experimentation.

The rational thinking process is the setting for the scientific study, and the latter presupposes the concept of causality, as it wouldn't make any sense to examine the causal relationship in various phenomena without acknowledging the principle of causality, to begin with.

The rational thinking process creates a rational framework for understanding and provides us with a worldview about what exists, in reality, i.e., the things we've sensed. The existence can rightly so be proven, where concepts about objects pivot around the names of the objects and the functionality of the objects, whereas the scientific study seeks to uncover new details about and aspects of objects.

In the scientific study various inference types are employed, for instance, ways to go from generalizations to concretizations and vice versa; deduction and induction.

Deduction is the process of applying a theory (the general) to a particular topic (the concrete), whereas induction is the process of generalizing from a particular topic (the concrete) to a general theory (generalization).

An example of deduction is a general idea, that material lighter than the water under it floats. So, if we have a piece of wood, which is lighter than the water beneath it in a lake or in the ocean, then the wood should float.

An example of induction is to observe a white swan (number 1) followed by observing another white swan (number 2), ..., followed by observing yet another white swan (number 100), so we expect the next swan to be white as well. We are, however, surprised because the next swan was black contrary to our expectation.

The example illustrates the problem with induction, which some philosophers termed *The Problem of Induction*; through induction, we can't predict, what the next element will be no matter how many swans, we observe.

Some people confuse rational thinking with induction, which is why they argue, that it's impossible to reach certainty. But there isn't any

conflict between rational thinking and induction, as they deal with two different spheres or aspects of reality.

The rational thinking process tells us, swans exist, while the inductive inference makes us conclude, that the next swan we'll observe should be white. Neither one of them rules out that the next swan is black; the rational thinking process, however, only deals with the existence of swans, while the inductive inference is utilized to generalize from observations.

The rational thinking process only confirms, what can be established for the time being, so if we've only seen and heard about white swans, then rationality confirms the existence of only white swans while deeming all other colored swans imaginary, if someone was to claim, that they exist.

The inductive process leads to generalizations, that doesn't lead to absolute knowledge, because it is impossible to have enough observations needed to confirm the generalization of characteristics of objects, i.e., it's rarely the case, that we can observe all the elements which were generalized on. Therefore, it's impossible through induction to rule out that we'll someday discover swans having other colors.

Metaphysics

Metaphysics is by definition the Unseen and thus insensuous, which is why neither the rational nor the scientific thinking process can be employed to confirm or invalidate metaphysical ideas.

All metaphysical ideas depend on and rest on the authority and authenticity of religious texts, which is why it's nonsensical to attack metaphysical ideas instead of scrutinizing the texts they rest upon, which should be subjected to examination and potential rightful criticism.

If the fundamental correctness of the texts can be confirmed, then the next step is to examine the particular texts, that a specific metaphysical topic rests upon.

In Islam, the revealed texts are the Qur'an and the Traditions of the Prophet ﷺ (sunnah). Some of the texts are ambiguous while others are unambiguous, and their authenticity varies and is categorized into the beforementioned division; conclusive and non-conclusive.

The authenticity of the Qur'an is conclusive, i.e., every part of the Qur'an was revealed by Allah ﷻ to our master, Muhammad ﷺ, and it was passed on unaltered by Muhammad ﷺ to the people of his generation, and that generation passed the Qur'an on unaltered to the next generation and so forth until it was passed unaltered on to our generation.

A particular verse of the 'Qur'an can be unambiguous (qata'i) or ambiguous (dhanni) with regards to the meaning (ad-dalalah) of the verse.

The narrations about the Prophet ﷺ are termed the Traditions (as-sunnah) and can, in the same manner, be ambiguous (dhanni) or unambiguous (qata'i) with regards to the meaning (ad-dalalah) of the narration. Their authenticity can be conclusive (qata'i) or non-conclusive (dhanni) with regards to transmission (ar-riwayah).

To render it a conclusive proof (qata'i thuboot), both the meaning (ad-dalalah) must be unambiguous, and the transmission (ar-riwayah) must be definitive.

The conclusive proofs in Islam therefore only consist of unambiguous verses of the Qur'an and narrations that are unambiguous in meaning and conclusive in transmission.

The non-conclusive texts related to actions and thoughts are mandatory to accept, however, the level of certainty should be on the same level as the authenticity of the text.

The topics mentioned so far are elementary, and most people understand them intuitively. The challenges, however, are to be found in the intersection between reality and metaphysics. We shall go into depth within this sphere in what follows.

The intersection between reality and metaphysics

Ideas which can be confirmed through rational thinking should self-evidently be confirmed as rational ideas. Ideas in the realm of metaphysics, which can't be confirmed nor disproven by the rational thinking process, and therefore not by the scientific thinking process either, should self-evidently be accepted with the same level of certainty as the level of authenticity of the texts upon which the metaphysical ideas rest. Metaphysical ideas, which don't rest on provable, authentic texts, should be rejected as superstition.

The implication of this is that rational ideas are accepted and acknowledged if they can be proven rationally. Therefore, we must acknowledge, that there are various conclusions, which the senses, and accordingly our minds, leads us to acknowledge. Metaphysical ideas are accepted and acknowledged, if their evidential base is authentic, and it's not possible to employ rational thinking nor the scientific method to confirm nor disprove metaphysics. The implication of this is that the existence of Angels, Hell, Paradise, Jinn, and other metaphysical ideas must be accepted, as these metaphysical ideas rest on a foundation, whose authenticity can be, and has been confirmed through the rational thinking process. So, despite the fact, that Angels are part of metaphysics, it is rational to acknowledge their existence.

It would, however, be irrational to acknowledge their existence, if it wasn't possible to prove the authenticity of the texts upon which the idea of their existence rests. In that case, it would be a product of imagination and accordingly superstition.

This means, that the idea X can be imagination or superstition for person A while being a rational idea for person B, if person A can't prove the authenticity of the foundation of the idea while B can prove it, for instance, if they refer to two different texts, two different books in the fold of the same religion, or books of two different religions.

This means, that person C can point out, that the idea X is superstition in a discussion with person A, while person C must acknowledge, that the very same idea is a rational idea in a discussion with person B.

Accordingly, the idea X must not be denied, if the authenticity of the texts that B employs, can be proven.

When people mix metaphysics with reality, they are at risk of developing superstitious ideas.

Some people don't understand the cause of an incident or a phenomenon, and the principle of causality, cause and effect, forces them to run through their mental lexicon, i.e., their previous information, where they might not always distinguish between rationality, confirmed metaphysics, and superstition.

If the causal explanation of a phenomenon isn't found through the rational method of thinking, then the next step is to undertake scientific studies and look for a natural explanation by examining the causal relationships. Nothing justifies throwing away the natural explanation and turning to ideas in the realm of metaphysics or ideas, whose causal relationship can't be explained – superstition. If the natural explanation isn't found, then one needs to try harder to find it, develop new methods for examining the phenomenon, or new ways of undertaking readings or measurements, as it should be possible to uncover causal relationships.

We are obliged to look for the natural explanation, as Islam is built on rationality. Based on the principle of causality we conclude, that there is a Creator behind the world, thus the Creator is the cause, and the world the effect.

We rule out all explanations that don't conform to the principle of causality, which is why we rule out the possibilities, that the world caused itself and that it came into being by itself.

We also rule out, that the world is eternal, as it would lead to infinite regression to have an infinite occurrences of events before the present, i.e., because we are now in the present, therefore we can rule out, that infinite incidents have occurred until now, since we wouldn't be in the present, if that was the case.

When reflecting on the notion of eternity, we can ascertain, that everything subject to time, place, and the laws of nature can't be eternal, why nothing in the world or nothing similar to something in the world can have caused the world. This rules out everything in existence; thus the world is created by something, which isn't part of the world.

It's not possible, that this Creator emerged by itself or that this Creator caused itself. The Creator could be caused by something else, which in turn also was caused by something in an infinite chain of creators, but that would lead to infinite regression, which rules out this possibility as well. The only explanation we're left with is that the Creator is eternal.

Some critics protest against this line of thought by saying, that if it's possible for the Creator to be eternal, then the world might as well be eternal on equal terms. But this apparently flawed, since it's not possible, that the world is eternal because everything in the world is subjected to time, place, and laws of nature, which leads to the problem of infinite regression.

The Creator must therefore necessarily not be subjected to time, place, and laws of nature; thus the Creator being eternal doesn't lead to infinite regression.

The Qur'an has 4 possible sources:

1. The Arabs.
2. Muhammad ﷺ.
3. The non-Arabs.
4. Allah ﷻ.

After completing a rational examination, we can rule out, that the Qur'an is produced by the Arabs, Muhammad ﷺ, and the non-Arabs – none of these were able to nor will be able to produce something like the Qur'an. After conducting a rational examination, we conclude, that the Qur'an was revealed by Allah ﷻ.

It is thus rationality, that leads us to acknowledge the truth of Islam to begin with, which can be undermined by superstition and ignoring the principle of causality. Therefore, besides being intellectually

indefensible, it's also inconsistent to ignore causality when explaining phenomena and incidents, unless there is irrefutable evidence, that the explanation is supernatural like in the case of the origin of the world or the miracles of Prophets and Messengers related to claims of messages from the Creator.

When people don't distinguish between employing metaphysics regarding the origin of the world and regarding explanations of phenomena in the world, the consequence can be:

- 1) They give rise to superstitious ideas.
- 2) They reject the existence of the creator as being superstition.

If natural phenomena and incidents are explained with metaphysics as the causal relationship between cause and effect, and there isn't any conclusive evidence, that this explanation must be a metaphysical explanation, then the explanation is superstition.

The other tendency due to not distinguishing between employing metaphysics in the two topics might lead to rejecting metaphysics altogether. Or due to rejecting metaphysics one might reject it in both topics. It is crucial to distinguish between the two topics, as the issue of the origin of the world can't be answered with a natural explanation, not now nor in the future.

Some people might object and claim, that it's only a matter of time before science has evolved enough to expand our abilities thus enabling us to examine the origin of the world scientifically. This claim, however, has some fundamental problems:

- 1) History can't be falsified.
- 2) Science can't be employed when there is a lack of material to work on, as it's outside the work sphere of science since it's also outside the work sphere of the mind.

Falsibility is a criterion, which in brief helps us to distinguish between imagination and scientific theories. Person A could for instance claim, that Santa Claus is real and place the burden of proof on person B, who disagrees. B could then spend the rest of his life pointing towards

different places in the universe, where we might expect to find Santa Claus, proving that he isn't there. An entire lifetime wouldn't be sufficient to point out all the places, where Santa Claus could be, so B will never succeed in disproving the existence of Santa Claus.

Instead, the burden of proof belongs to A if the statement expresses knowledge. So, if A wishes to present a scientific theory, then it's incumbent on A to offer some criterias, which if met, disproves his theory. A could, for instance, present a theory about Santa Claus being real and restricted to 20 physical locations, and if B wishes to disprove the theory, then all B needs to do is to examine those 20 locations. If it's not possible to find Santa Claus in any of those 20 locations, then the conclusion is, that Santa Claus isn't real, and the theory has been refuted. Note: The examples about Santa Claus aren't scientific theories, but they illustrate the notion of falsibility.

Strictly speaking, history can't be falsified. It's not possible to present criterias which if met disprove plausible historical explanations. For instance, A, B, and C sat in the same room and had a conversation. One of them shouted at the others. A claims that B was the one who shouted, while B claims that it was C, while C claims it was B. In this situation, it's impossible to present criterias, which if met, rules out one of the possibilities. It is, however, possible to locate impossible explanations and rule them out, but that doesn't mean, that it's possible to reach the correct explanation amongst the plausible ones.

This is a crucial point in understanding why it's not possible to discover how the world emerged, employing science. Thus, it's wrong due to the principle of falsification to claim, that someday we'll find the answer through science since history can't be falsified, strictly speaking, and it's not possible to confirm the correct explanation through science.

Another problem is related to the work sphere of science; the scientific study is undertaken restricted by a rational frame, and the rational process presupposes a sensuous reality. But, before the existence of the world, nothing existed which is outside the work sphere of the mind and accordingly outside the work sphere of science since the scientific thinking, or the scientific process rests upon rational thinking no matter how much science evolves in the future.

This is the situation where nothing exists yet, i.e., the world hasn't emerged yet, whereas the examination of the causal relationships between particular incidents and phenomena is a situation where the world exists, and everything we know is part of a system along with the rest of existence enabling us to describe various phenomena with causal relationships.

Thus, due to rational thinking, the explanation regarding the emergence of the world is required to be a metaphysical explanation. And due to rational thinking, the explanation regarding phenomena after the world has emerged requires that we don't look for metaphysical explanations – the only exception being the cases that involve conclusive evidence which forces us to accept metaphysical explanations to phenomena.

So, on the one hand, we find people who believe in “too many things,” i.e., they are superstitious, and on the other hand we find people who believe in “too few things.” Both approaches are flawed, as are the conclusions of both camps. The flaw occurs due to not distinguishing between metaphysics concerning the emergence of the world and concerning explaining natural phenomena and incidents. In the first case, a metaphysical explanation is the only rational explanation due to the principle of causality, while in the second case a metaphysical explanation without irrefutable evidence is superstition.

In the intersection between metaphysics and reality, a phenomenon or an incident could have a metaphysical and a natural explanation without a conflict between these two explanations, as they could be explanations pertaining to two different dimensions where the outer dimension is uncovered by causal relationships in the natural world, and the hidden cause only is known due to texts which inform us about the hidden, disguised cause.

When examining the causal relationship between two phenomena or incidents, one looks for the correlation between them, i.e., is it the case that both occur in relation to the other or without the other. After this step, one can look into whether or not there is a causal relationship between them in the guise of cause and effect. It's easy to make mistakes in this process by assuming a correlation between them, to

begin with, and accordingly in assuming that there is a causal relationship between them. We'll explore this in what follows.

Misunderstood correlation

Correlation does not equal causality, i.e., it's not the case that because A occurs before B several times, then there must be a causal relationship between them in the guise of cause and effect. And more fundamentally speaking, one might perceive a correlation between them that in reality is non-existent.

A study mentioned by Stuart Vyse in the book, *Believing in magic*, serves as an excellent example of this. A group of nurses read the journals of 100 patients and were asked if they believed, there was a correlation between the symptom and the disease. 85% of them believed there was a correlation. They only looked at the occurrence of both the symptom and the disease which was the case for 37 of 100 patients. The nurses didn't notice that 33 patients had the symptom but didn't have the disease, i.e., they didn't employ other information except the number of patients having both the symptom and the disease.

The nurses didn't notice that 33 patients had the symptom but yet didn't have the disease. They concluded that there is a correlation between the symptom and the disease based on limited information, i.e., the number of patients having the symptom and the disease.

If we include more information about the 100 patients, we have the following:

		Disease	
		Yes	No
Symptom	Yes	37	33
	No	17	13

Table 1: The complete data related to the patients, the symptom, and the disease.

From the table we understand at 17 patients had the disease, even though they didn't have the symptom, 33 had the symptom without

having the disease, 37 had both the symptom and the disease, while 13 didn't have the symptom nor the disease.

If we examine the data related to confirming the correlation between the symptom and the disease, we find that the cases that confirm the correlation between the symptom and the disease are $37+13 = 50$, i.e., half the patients. However, if we examine the data related to disproving the correlation between the symptom and the disease are $33+17 = 50$, i.e., also half the patients. This shows us that it's not possible to confirm a correlation between the symptom and the disease.

This example illustrates how some people might imagine that there is a relationship between two phenomena by focusing on when both occur; 37 patients had the symptom and the disease – in spite of there isn't a relationship between them.

In her article titled *Illusory correlation in observational report* from 1967, Loren J. Chapman described how this imagined correlation in different contexts gives rise to flawed conclusions both related to superstition such as the belief in magic, errors in clinical observations, social prejudice, and the halo-effect.

Misinterpretation of variance

When experiencing disease, a person might perceive some medicine, natural medicine, a ritual, an object, etc. as having an effect. Diseases can be divided into two types:

- 1) Common diseases from which one recovers in due time.
- 2) Chronical diseases that are terminal.

In the case of common diseases, the course of the disease typically begins with being ill, and at some point in time, one begins to get better. In this situation, after a few days of experiencing illness one might try things hoping to get better. One might actually get better and think, that the thing one used actually helped one to recover. But the truth may be, that the disease went away not helped by the medicine, so in reality, the things one employed didn't really have any effect. It's not possible to know what would've happened if one didn't try the things

one did, and one just reached a point in the course of the disease where one would feel better as illustrated in Figure 1; the progression of diseases and one's condition reaching an ultimate low point from which one can only recover.



Figure 1: From this point on auto-recovery occurs.

In the case of chronic diseases, the course of disease doesn't include a linear worsening in health as some people might believe. In the bigger picture, one's condition worsens, but during that course, one would experience periods with worsened or a little better health status. One might try something in the period one's condition worsened followed by feeling better leading one to the erroneous belief that whatever one tried had an effect.

Figure 2 illustrates one's condition in relation to time and the low point up until the current point in the course of the disease.



Figure 2: A local low point in the course of the disease.

Compared to the low points all short-term peaks in the condition will be experienced as an improvement as illustrated in figure 3. However, it will still be a worsening in the health condition compared to the beginning of the course of the disease:



Figure 3: A local peak compared to the previous local low point.

The consequences of misinterpreting variance in the course of diseases can lead to a perception of an erroneous causal connection between the employed means; medicine, rituals, or other objects with what one mistakenly believes is an improvement – this might explain why some people experience a confirmation of their superstitious beliefs in this regard through experience.

Placebo & nocebo

The placebo effect entails that one has an expectation about the positive effect of some particular medicine which leads to a temporal, even if it's only imaginary, improvement in one's health condition. In the medicine industry, the placebo effect is taken into account during clinical trials by having control groups who are given medicine without any effect (a placebo, for instance, a sugar pastel). This serves as a baseline for comparing the reported effects by the different test subjects and ensuring that the reported effect isn't merely due to the placebo effect.

The opposite of the placebo effect is termed the nocebo effect where someone might be skeptical about the effect of some medications leading to a temporary worsening in one's health condition. The negative expectations towards the medicine can lead to annulling the effect of the medication or even lead to side effects.

The placebo and nocebo effects can give rise to superstition, as one might imagine that a ritual or an object has an effect on one's health or other elements. For instance, one might expect it is possible for someone to perform Voodoo and thus feel a temporary worsening in one's health condition.

Understanding texts and their authenticity

Throughout Islamic history, the issue of how to deal with texts has been disputed. As mentioned before, there are two dimensions of a transmitted text:

1. The transmission (ar-riwayah) which is checked through chains of narrations (isnad). The verdict is related to authenticity based on the chain of narration.
2. The meaning (ad-dalalah) which is checked based on the content of the text (matn). The verdict is related to ambiguousness and unambiguousness.

The transmission can be conclusive or non-conclusive, and the meaning can be ambiguous or unambiguous. Only in the case where both the transmission is conclusive, and the meaning is unambiguous the proof is definitive (qata'i thubut), whereas in all other cases the proof is non-conclusive (dhanni thubut).

The Qur'an has been transmitted in a conclusive manner; however, some verses of the Qur'an are unambiguous, and some are ambiguous which is why only some verses of the Qur'an render conclusive proofs while others render non-conclusive proofs.

The Traditions of the Prophet ﷺ (as-sunnah) can be divided into conclusively transmitted (mutawatir) narrations and (non-conclusively transmitted) single-narrated narrations (khabr ahad).

A central issue which has given rise to a lot of dispute and difference of opinion is what to do in the case where texts don't conform to reality? Or in the case where both metaphorical and literal interpretations are possible?

On the one hand, Revelation can't conflict with the mind and reality, and on the other hand, the mind and human perception of reality can be flawed.

Throughout history, Muslim scholars developed different approaches to when to accept and reject conclusive and non-conclusive texts. Some focused strictly on the chain of narration, while others included the content of the text. The narrations categorized as weak (al-ahadith ad-da'eefah) were rejected; however, some scholars allowed employing them under strict criteria in the issue of good deeds pertaining to individuals (fada'il al-a'mal), whereas other scholars maintained a complete rejection of weak narrations.

In his works, Jonathan A. C. Brown summarizes 4 characteristics presented by al-Khatib al-Baghdadi in the book *al-Kifayah fi 'Ilm ir-Riwayah*, pertaining to fabricated narrations which captures the essence of the contributions to the subject of the different orientations and their approaches:

1. The narration conflicts with the mind.
2. The narration conflicts with the Qur'an.
3. The narration pertains to an issue that is important to everyone, but the narration was only narrated by a few people.
4. The narration deals with a very incredible incident, but the narration was only narrated by a few people.

The arguments for these characteristics should be obvious.

The background for a total acceptance vs. a total rejection of non-conclusive narrations

In addition to the summary, Jonathan A. C. Brown gives a very informative overview of the historical development of the attitudes of Muslim circles towards narrations, in the books *Misquoting Muhammad*, *The Canonization of al-Bukhārī and Muslim*, and *Hadith – and also in the articles The Rules of Matn Criticism and How We Know Early Hadith Critics Did Matn Criticism and Why It's So Hard to Find*.

He describes a difference of opinion throughout history regarding the attitude towards non-conclusive narrations which gave rise to the formation of schools of thought pertaining to jurisprudence and beliefs ('aqa'id).

At the one end of the scale, some Muslims had a very skeptical attitude towards non-conclusive narrations which lead them to reject almost all the narrations which, in their perspective, conflicted with reason, almost regardless of the authenticity of the narration. At the other end of the scale, some Muslims had a very high trust in the strength of the chain of narration, almost regardless of the content of the narration.

At first, a somewhat intermediary camp absorbed ideas and the approaches of both camps by taking both the strength of the chains of

narration and the content of the narration into account. Due to political circumstances, the influence of the skeptical camp diminished which gave rise to a rhetorical canonization of the collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim. When a narration found in both collections served one's agenda, one would draw on the idea of the Muslim nation reaching a consensus to assign their authority to these two collections, but when the narration didn't serve one's agenda, one would draw on the basic idea of the right to criticize a narration as long as it is done on proper grounds.

Over time, the focus on the strength of the chain of narration increased, until various western countries began to colonize the Muslim part of the world. Now an intensive cultural exchange occurred even more so than before, as the westerners had a new-found trust in science which they employed to launch a massive criticism of various aspects of Islam and the sciences which Muslim scholars had developed – especially the science of *hadith*.

Some Muslim thinkers reacted by becoming skeptical towards narrations, and thus the Traditions of the Prophet ﷺ, to the extent that movements emerged various places in the Muslim world which promoted the idea that only the Qur'an is Revelation, i.e., the *hadith* literature should be rejected. This gave rise to another reaction by other Muslims who now said that all narrations with an authentic chain of narration are Revelation.

One crucial and often overlooked detail related to the science of *hadith* is that the strict criteria were set, and the thorough work was undertaken, regarding narrations pertaining to rules, while the very same scholars were lenient regarding narrations regarding individual good deeds, details in beliefs, history, and apocalyptic literature.

People who aren't aware of this detail might draw a false analogy between an absurd narration about an idea concerning an aspect in beliefs which is contained in a narration categorized as *sahih* and a narration about a rule whose background is hard to understand – leading them to feel that both narrations should be rejected. Another consequence might be the acceptance of absurd ideas and superstition

which crept into the hadith literature since the focus of the strict evaluation was the narrations about rules and laws.

A balanced approach to narrations should include the type of the topic, the importance of the topic, whether or not the content is in conformity to the mind and to reality, the strength of the chain of narration, and the fact that the mind is unable and incapable of determining rules and laws, while the mind is able to assess whether or not an idea describing a part of the reality is realistic or absurd.

The scope of the free will of man

In the past, there was a discussion in Muslim circles; an import of a problem discussed by Greek philosophers: Who creates the actions of man? The answers were: (1) Man creates his own actions vs. (2) Allah ﷻ creates the actions of man.

At first, the protest from the first camp was that Allah ﷻ is Just, and it wouldn't be Just of Him ﷻ to create a person, determine whether or not this person should accept Islam, and then punish the person for eternity in the Hell-Fire for something, the person didn't choose.

This protest forced the second camp to modify their stance by including a philosophical setup: Man intends to perform an action followed by Allah ﷻ creating the action which man appropriates (kasb al-ikhtiyari). Man is thus held accountable for his intention and appropriation.

The revised stance of the second camp is, in reality, the same stance before revising it – it just includes a rhetorical displacement; before the revision, the action in its entirety was created by Allah ﷻ, whereas after the revision, man has an active role in appropriating the action which is still created by Allah ﷻ.

Due to political circumstances, the stance of the second camp became widespread and dominant. It's, however, beyond the scope of our examination which is why we won't go further into this issue. (This shouldn't be understood as an acceptance of one of the stances on our part.)

The relevant part of this issue is something mentioned by Stuart Vyse in his book *Believing in magic*: Research indicates that there is a connection between what is termed an external locus of control and superstition. Locus of control is divided into internal and external. The division pertains to whether one places control of one's life with oneself (internal) or with something else (external). In this regard, the results of the studies in this field show that the more one places control over one's life externally, the higher the probability is of developing superstitious ideas. Furthermore, research on conformity shows that an internal locus of control leads to an opposing and less submissive mindset and accordingly the same kind of personality. This might contribute to explain why the opinions of the second camp became popular amongst those in power, and why these opinions were maintained as the orthodox interpretation of Islam by those in power as tyranny emerged in the Islamic history under the Caliphate since these opinions contribute to shaping submissive citizens with a passive victim mentality who are unable to act in a wholehearted manner. But the political consequences of the idea are another issue.

The relevant part for our examination is to keep the fact in mind that a worldview which includes something external controlling one's life gives rise to one most likely developing superstitious ideas.

In the following, we'll look into the relationship between a feeling of a lack of control over one's life and superstition.

Destiny

The future is part of the domain of the Unseen, i.e., nobody knows the future, which leads to a degree of uncertainty about the future, which is why there are numerous possibilities for developing superstitious ideas in the attempt of trying to explain and cope with "chance." The feeling of a lack of control might be experienced as disturbing for a lot of people, which might give rise to superstitious ideas. Stuart Vyse mentions the following about this feeling of a lack of control in his book *Believing in magic*:

"Superstition is an attempt to control the uncontrollable [...] We wish for control and autonomy. The lack of a feeling of personal control is one of the most important aspects of many psychological problems. Depression is believed to be a result of being helpless and unable to act in an effective manner regarding the world. If there is a universal truth about superstition, then it is that superstitious behavior occurs due to insecurity concerning circumstances characterized by randomness and uncontrollability."

In this context, superstition emerges due to people believing or hoping that an object or an action has an influence on current events or incidents in the future, i.e., they perceive an unjustified causal relationship between an object or an action, incidents, or events occurring in the future.

Objects, incidents & events

Some people imagine that various objects might bring good or bad luck. But nothing indicates a causal relationship between, for instance, possessing a horseshoe, a four-leaf clover, Thor's hammer, Fatima's hand, an amulet shaped like an eye, or any other amulet, and an event which makes it very clear that such perceived causal relationship is superstition.

The notions of good and bad luck combined with the uncertainty about the future make people (just in case) employ amulets and talismans, for instance, with the argument *if it didn't have an effect, then no harm is done*,

whereas if it did have an effect, then using it was beneficial. This isn't, however, a valid argument for the correctness of the idea.

The notion of good luck is so abstract that it fits almost anything. The same applies to the notions of bad luck, success, and protection against evil. They are impossible to falsify because how is someone to examine that one became more fortunate or unfortunate, more successful, or more protected against evil than before employing the particular object?

The mind is prone to err due to being at risk for an unconscious search for ways to confirm the erroneous belief leading the mind to notice only the cases which confirm the ideas while ignoring the cases that don't prove or even disprove the idea. The implication of this is that if one believes that an object brings fortune, then one might unconsciously notice all the incidents and events that can be termed fortunate and disregard the unfortunate ones. Psychologically, this can be explained by an increase in mental surplus due to happiness or comfort which enables one to trivialize events and incidents which one would usually find irritating and term unfortunate. The same applies to other notions such as bad luck, success, and protection against evil, etc.

Thus, it's not possible to examine if the object one connects with fortune or anything else, really brings good fortune, since luck isn't measurable due to being abstract. A gut feeling indicating that the object brings fortune isn't sufficient since the gut feeling most often is a result of the beforementioned pitfall leading the mind to err and thus making the mind notice the cases that confirm the idea and disregard the cases that don't. Furthermore, since no time interval is defined, then one has all time in the world to one's disposal for an incident or event to occur which fits the abstract term. Thus, it's evident superstition to believe that an object brings fortune, etc. These ways of testing the causal relationship are contained in what is termed reliability (precision in measurement), repeatability (the same result during repetition), and reproducibility (possible for others to examine) to name a few notions in scientific theory.

Instead, if one were to connect an object with something specific inside a given time interval, then it would be possible to examine whether or

not it was the case. For instance, if one believes that one would receive \$10,000 before the lapse of 24 hours due to owning an amulet, then it's possible to test the belief. However, it's not enough to test it a few times since the reception of the money could be due to other factors, so it should be tested several times, and it should also be possible for others to reach the same conclusion by testing it. This makes it clear that this belief is superstition.

The belief that an object protects against evil suffers from the same problems. An important addition is, however, that it's not possible to prove that employing the object has had any effect since it would require knowledge about the future that allegedly was changed by using the object.

Thus, there isn't any object that magically brings good or bad fortune which can be proven to bring success or protect against evil, and any insistence on the opposite should be rejected as superstition.

There aren't any Islamic texts which connect an object in itself which good or bad fortune, success or protection against evil, so if a Muslim should make such a claim, then it's superstition on his part without any relation to Islam.

The Islamic texts mention how the Companions of the Prophet acted around him ﷺ, and how they due to their love for him ﷺ took hair and other objects from him ﷺ, and how the Prophet ﷺ redirected their love for him ﷺ from objects to performing good deeds:

عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي قَرْدٍ: أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَوَضَّأَ يَوْمًا، فَجَعَلَ النَّاسُ يَتَمَسَّحُونَ بِوُضُوئِهِ، قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَا يَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ، قَالُوا: حُبُّ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، قَالَ: مَنْ سَرَّهُ أَنْ يُحِبَّهُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ فَلْيَصْدُقْ حَدِيثَهُ إِذَا حَدَّثَ، وَلْيُؤَدِّ أَمَانَتَهُ إِذَا أُؤْتِمِنَ، وَلْيُحْسِنْ جَوَارَ مَنْ جَاوَرَ

“Abdur Rahman Ibn Abi Qarad narrated one day, the Prophet ﷺ performed wudhu’, and his companions began to employ his used water to wash themselves. The Prophet ﷺ asked them: ‘What makes you do this?’ They said: ‘Love for Allah and His Messenger. The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Whosoever wishes to love Allah and His Messenger or wishes that Allah and His Messenger should love him, let him be

truthful when he speaks, and let him fulfill his trust when he is trusted with something, and let him treat his neighbor well.” (at-Tabarani)

Thus, there isn't any justification for viewing objects as sacred or supernatural in Islam.

Rituals, incidents, and events

Some people might connect a ritual or an event with an outcome in the guise of incidents and events even though there isn't a causal relationship between them why it should be rejected as superstition.

Superstition was common and widespread in the time of the Prophet ﷺ, so when the son of the Prophet died, the Prophet ﷺ heard rumors about some people who were connecting a solar eclipse with the death of the son of the Prophet ﷺ. It was narrated that he ﷺ commented on the rumors:

عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى، قَالَ خَسَفَتِ الشَّمْسُ، فَقَامَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَرَعَا، يَخْشَى أَنْ تَكُونَ السَّاعَةُ، فَأَتَى الْمَسْجِدَ، فَصَلَّى بِأَطْوَلِ قِيَامٍ وَرُكُوعٍ وَسُجُودٍ رَأَيْتُهُ قَطُّ يَفْعَلُهُ وَقَالَ هَذِهِ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ لَا تَكُونُ لِمَوْتِ أَحَدٍ وَلَا لِحَيَاتِهِ، وَلَكِنْ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهُ بِهِ عِبَادَهُ، فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ شَيْئًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَافْزَعُوا إِلَى ذِكْرِهِ وَدُعَائِهِ وَاسْتِغْفَارِهِ

“Abu Musa narrated: The sun eclipsed, and the Prophet got up, being afraid that it might be the Hour (i.e., The Day of Judgment). He went to the Mosque and offered the prayer with the longest qiyam, bowing and prostration that I had ever seen him doing. Then he said: “These signs which Allah sends do not occur because of the life or death of somebody, but Allah makes His worshipers afraid by them. So, when you see anything thereof, proceed to remember Allah, invoke Him and ask for His forgiveness.” (al-Bukhari)

Rain dance is an example of a ritual of which it is said that some people perceive a relation between the ritual and an effect on reality even though it's not possible to point out a causal relationship.

The medicine man (or the shaman) dances rain dance until someone or something which allegedly controls the weather is satisfied and makes it rain. Nothing really allows one to connect the rain dance with the

rain in a causal relationship with the rain as the cause of rain nor as a contributing factor to causing the rain.

If there was a time limit included in the claim, for instance, 'it shall rain in the course of the next 24 hours after the rain dance has begun' then we would have a criterion enabling us to falsify the idea by simply repeating rain dance X times and by observing if it begins to rain before the 24 hours have elapsed. In this case, the proponents of the belief would focus on the cases which confirmed the idea, while the opponents of the idea would, rightfully, focus on the cases which didn't confirm the belief which entailed the cases where it didn't begin to rain before the 24 hours had elapsed.

It's not possible to confirm nor to refute the causal relationship, and the same applies to the belief that another factor causes the rain.

The issue is settled by 3 factors, in this case:

- 1) There are cases of rain dance occurring without any rain in the timespan of 24 hours.
- 2) There isn't any justification for the claim that rain dance has an influence on the weather.
- 3) Nothing rules out that other factors cause rain.

If there hasn't been given any deadline, then the idea isn't falsifiable since the medicine can dance until it begins to rain, and thus with time a causal relationship is built in the minds of the people who believe that rain dance has an effect on the weather. Since nothing really supports the belief that there is a causal relationship between dancing and rain, it is a clear example of superstition.

It's easy for outsiders to refute the idea and to objectively understand that there isn't a causal relationship between dancing and rain. However, people who are born and raised in an environment where for numerous generations people have been taking the causal relationship as self-evident, they might experience a lot of difficulties reconsidering the belief from a neutral perspective. For them, the belief is self-evident and might even seem rational to the degree that they might ridicule and reject the criticism of the idea of a causal relationship between dancing

and rain. A lot of narrations and stories would be found amongst them about how their ancestors danced rain dance, and how it caused the rain. A lot of eyewitnesses would also be found amongst them who would point out that they've seen it happen countless times. Skeptics, insiders and outsiders, would be asked if they think, their forefathers were ignorant, the elite amongst them liars, and their beloved ones who were eyewitnesses to this phenomenon being true were crazy, ignorant, or liars.

There is an issue of conformity which can't be ignored, in this case. Conformity is defined by Stuart Vyse as *A change in beliefs or behavior to accommodate a group due to real or imagined group pressure*. When the change pertains to beliefs, it's called private acceptance.

Vyse mentions an experiment including different lengths on objects in which everyone answered before the test subject and gave a wrong answer followed by him also giving a wrong answer. When asked about the reason for giving a wrong answer, the test subject explained that it was due to group pressure and a wish of not ruining the data.

Another study involved different groups engaging in a debate including allies, a deviant, and people who switched sides as the debate proceeded. It turned out that the deviant was less popular, and the others tried to put group pressure on him. This shows that in a community, people might be pressured to be silent or even to express agreement about an idea, even though they don't agree with it. The implications thus are an imagined consensus with an expressed or unexpressed requirement of conformity in the atmosphere.

The thing is, it's entirely possible for mistaken or even irrational ideas to be accepted by a community to the extent that they are considered self-evident, rational ideas. They then become a natural part of the interpretative framework employed by the community to understand reality in – especially the blurry parts of reality. This means that the community interprets reality through a lens consisting of ideas, while they mistakenly believe the ideas have been confirmed by reality itself.

Another example is the recitation of rhymes and obscure incantations. There isn't any causal relationship between the utterance of words and

change in natural phenomena. I.e., based on the sensuous reality it's not possible to show any causal relationship between speaking some words or even a sentence and changes in the reality surrounding us.

If we consider the phenomenon to call upon Allah ﷻ and asking something of Him ﷻ (du'a), then the same criticism is launched against this act of worship by some non-Muslims. They bring forth the same criticism regarding the impossibility of showing a causal relationship between *du'a* and events and that it's not possible to falsify the effect of *du'a* – which is correct. The effect of *du'a* isn't accepted due to an analysis of the reality; it's accepted due to the Islamic texts informing us about the effect.

Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ instructed us that our worship and our call should solely be directed towards Allah ﷻ. We are informed that when we ask something of Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ can choose to answer our prayers in one of three ways:

- 1) By granting us what we ask for.
- 2) By removing some harm that would have afflicted us.
- 3) Or as a gift waiting for us in the Hereafter, and this is the best way for a *du'a* to be answered. (Ahmad)

Even non-Muslim might be granted what they ask for, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ قُلْ مَنْ يُنَجِّيكُمْ مِنَ ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ تَدْعُونَهُ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً لَّئِنْ أَنجَانَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُنَجِّيكُمْ مِنْهَا وَمِنْ كُلِّ كَرْبٍ ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ مُشْرِكُونَ ﴾

“Say: ‘Who would save you from the darkness of the land and sea, if you were to pray humbly and secretly saying: ‘Would that we were saved from this, for we would certainly then give thanks.’” Say: ‘It is Allah who always saves you from (such hardship) and from all kinds of distress. Even then, you consider idols equal to God.’”

﴿ وَأَتَاكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا ۗ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴾

“He has given you everything that you asked Him for. Had you wanted to count the bounties of God, you would not have been able to do it. The human being is unjust and disbelieving.” (14:34)

The thing is, the idea of the effect of *du'a* isn't based on rational evidence. We call upon Allah ﷻ and know that our prayers are answered based on the Islamic texts, and the truthfulness of the Islamic text is confirmed by rational thinking since the rational conclusion is that Allah ﷻ sent our master, Muhammad ﷺ, and revealed the Qur'an to him ﷺ.

This is justified and well-founded metaphysics based on texts whose authenticity can't be disputed, which is why it's not superstition even though the effect of prayer can't be tested through scientific studies as it isn't a requirement in this context. The Muslim thus experiences that some of his or her prayers are answered in this life according to the texts, while others are answered by either the removal of harm which would have afflicted him or her, or by something better being prepared for him or her in the Hereafter. This is outside the scope of the mind and instead based on texts whose authenticity have been rationally confirmed, as we have already discussed.

The ideas about spirits, the Evil Eye, magic, soothsayers, auspicious objects, and omens, etc. were widespread amongst ancient civilizations, and they were often very closely linked to one another. Anthropologists and other researchers suggest that the mindset which this kind of superstition is based on is due to animism:

"Animism is a spirit-belief where one believes that everything surrounding us has a soul and a magical energy (mana) which some people can control and direct, magicians or medicine men/shamans. The magician claimed that he was filled with mana which enabled him to communicate with spirits, know their intentions, influence them, know which objects contained how much mana, and to lead mana from himself into objects."

It should be clear to everyone that this is superstition; nothing suggests that the nature has a soul, that mana exists, that some people possess the ability to change and direct mana, and nothing indicates that people can communicate with spirits, engage in a relationship with them, influence them, or be influenced by them in any way. None of these beliefs can be falsified or tested, and there aren't any Islamic texts supporting the idea of the existence of mana, that it's possible for

someone to communicate with spirits, or that everything in nature has a soul.

Despite the ideas being very closely linked to each other, we'll examine them one at the time for the sake of clarity.

Amulets

The ideas about magic and amulets can be traced back to the year 3000 BC in Babylonian and Sumerian texts. The amulets were used for protection against the Evil Eye.

The Arabs feared both the Evil Eye and evil spirits which is why they employed amulets as a means of protection against them. In the development of amulets, they borrowed a lot of superstition from the Hebrews, Egyptians, and the Gnostics and crafted amulets from stones, bones, and wood.

Several narrations prohibit the use of amulets, the Prophet ﷺ said:

من تعلق تميمة فقد أشرك

“Whosoever hangs an amulet commits shirk.” (Ahmad)

من تعلق تميمة فلا أتم الله له

“Whosoever hangs an amulet, then Allah shall not help him with his affairs.” (Ahmad)

إن الرقي والتمايم والتولة والشرك

“Verily, incantations, amulets, and love spells are shirk.” (Ahmad, Ibn Majah & Abu Dawud)

Scholars have explained the context of these narrations, that they prohibit the use of amulets from the pre-Islamic era (jahiliyah) which are connected to superstition; such as the amulet in itself has a protective power, while there is a difference of opinion on the permissibility of employing amulets containing verses of the Qur'an.

So, all in all, amulets can be employed as adornments which hollows out the notion of amulets and actually removes the purpose of

employing amulets, to begin with. Some people claim that Allah ﷻ shall protect them to a greater extent due to them wearing an 'Islamic' amulet, i.e., an amulet engraved with or containing verses of the Qur'an, however, there aren't any Islamic texts confirming this.

Amulets & healing

Some people imagine that Allah ﷻ to a greater extent will heal them from diseases due to them employing an 'Islamic' amulet based on some of the verses in the Qur'an, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

"and heal the hearts of a believing people." (9:14)

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

"O mankind! there has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the breasts and a guidance and a mercy for the believers." (10:57)

﴿ وَنُزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾

"And We reveal of the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only to the perdition of the unjust." (17:82)

﴿ قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءٌ ﴾

"Say: And We reveal of the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers" (41:44)

These verses deal with diseases in a figurative sense, also termed diseases of the heart which the Qur'an treats and heals by us reading and understanding the profound ideas which Allah ﷻ informs us about. This is thus a treatment of wrong ideas with correct ideas from the Lord of everything that exists through the Qur'an. It shouldn't be confused with physical diseases which should be healed employing the Qur'an.

Divination & clairvoyance

The history of divination can be traced back to approximately the year 4000 BC in various civilizations including China, Babylon, Chaldea, and Egypt. Particularly two aspects have been dominant when employing divination; the spirit world and the future.

Nothing confirms that we have access to spirits or ghosts. Rationally speaking, nothing confirms the existence of ghosts and spirits to begin with.

Furthermore, nothing confirms that the soul of man wanders the earth after death in the guise of a ghost, and no Islamic texts confirm this either which basically is sufficient to reject the claim of clairvoyants about them being able to communicate with ghosts or spirits in the spirit world.

The future is part of the Unseen, and nobody knows the Unseen besides Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ﴾

“Say: No one in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen but Allah.” (27:65)

Allah ﷻ might choose to reveal parts of the Unseen to people of His choice who are termed Prophets and Messengers. For us to accept the claim that someone has received revelation from Allah ﷻ, the person making this claim is required to cancel the laws of nature to prove that Allah ﷻ really did reveal a message to the person making such a claim. If this requirement isn't met the claim should be rejected as a lie.

Allah ﷻ informed the Prophet ﷺ about the reaction of some Jinn when they heard something from the Qur'an being recited and, in that context, we are informed that Jinn used to eavesdrop on what was being said in heaven:

﴿ وَأَنَا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ فَمَنْ يَسْمَعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَصَدًا ﴾

“And that we used to sit in some of the sitting-places thereof to steal a hearing, but he who would (try to) listen now would find a flame lying in wait for him.” (72:9)

Some narrations inform us that Jinn used to eavesdrop on messages in heaven about upcoming future events which they would inform clairvoyants about mixed with countless lies. But the very same narrations rule out the possibility today, just as the verse of the Qur'an does.

Thus, it's not possible to completely rule out that the claims of clairvoyants are based on what might have been possible in the past if these narrations can be authenticated. The relevant part, however, is that after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was chosen then this no longer was possible, and all the claims of clairvoyants communicating with spirits (or Jinn) about the future should be rejected.

Why are people fooled by divination & clairvoyants?

One of the most central psychological phenomena that gives rise to people being fooled by clairvoyants is that the human mind in many cases intuitively thinks in a confirmation-centered manner. This means that disregarding if one believes in an idea or not, we examine if it's possible to confirm the idea.

Stuart Vyse mentions in his book *Believing in Magic* that Glich & Snyder undertook a study regarding astrology with 12 participants who believed in astrology and 14 participants who were very skeptical towards astrology. The participants were asked to prepare questions for conducting an interview with a person who had his horoscope read by an astrologer where the horoscope indicated that the person was very extrovert. The person had been instructed by the researchers to give confirming answers to the questions asked by the participants without the knowledge of the participants.

The study showed that both groups of participants asked questions that examined confirmation rather than refutation such as *do you like attending parties?* This gave rise to both groups ended up confirming that the person was very extrovert, even though this wasn't the case.

This means that despite the attitude of the participants towards astrology, both groups ended up confirming a wrong conclusion due to intuitively asking questions examining if the conclusion can be confirmed. In the end, this led them to confirm the conclusion since the person they interviewed had been instructed to give confirming answers to their questions.

This combined with another psychological phenomenon: One might focus on the cases which confirm an idea rather than looking on both the cases which confirm the idea and the cases which invalidate the idea and even disproves the idea, which gives rise to fooling oneself into believing that the idea has been confirmed.

Another psychological phenomenon entails that we are constantly searching for meaning in what surrounds us. This is why we look for patterns, imagine something diffused looks like something we know, for instance, when we look at clouds, try to unravel speech impediments, grammatical errors, and misspellings, we restructure flawed texts and fill out missing words, etc., when we are reading. A few examples which most people can read and understand without much difficulty to illustrate this as shown in Table 2:

Flawed texts	Correct texts
I enjoy read these book.	I enjoy <i>reading this</i> book.
The ball threw the boy to the other boys.	The <i>boy</i> threw the <i>ball</i> to the other boys.
In the winter, we put on our boots, hats, and – the latter is crucial to avoid freezing on the hands when playing in the snow.	In the winter, we put on our boots, hats, and <i>gloves</i> – the latter is crucial to avoid freezing on the hands when playing in the snow.
It mkeas snsee.	It makes sense.
Yuo udnsternad tehse txet, eevn tuogh it is cmploety meessd.	You understand this text, even though it is completely messed up.

Table 2: Left: Flawed and right: correct sentences.

So, even when we hear something that doesn't make sense at first, at an unconscious level, we try to adapt it, so that it makes sense to us.

Another psychological phenomenon is called the Forer effect (AKA the Barnum effect) that entails people having a tendency to,

unconsciously, fill out vague, flattering descriptions about themselves with specific ideas, while they regard the vague description as very accurate. This means, that if a person is described with complimentary, abstract, or subjective terms, then the person will relate the words to his own life and understand something specific from the description.

How do people fool themselves with regards to divination?

The formulation of divinations usually entails something abstract and/or subjective which makes it easier for the victim to confirm the divination, for instance, *you will experience something terrible, you will experience something good after having bought and read this book ☺, you will find true love*, etc.

Furthermore, there typically isn't any deadline which gives the divination a deadline that spans until the end of the victim's life, and if it doesn't come true at that point, then the victim can hardly get a refund.

Another detail is, psychologically speaking, divinations might in some cases, for the people who believe in them, function as self-fulfilling prophecies. If a person is told that a particular event will lead to good fortune for the person, then it might increase the self-confidence of the person, thus optimizing the effort exerted by the person in the particular event and thus rendering a positive result or make the person focus on, or view the event as, something positive. The same applies the other way around, if the person is told that an event will lead to bad fortune, then it might have a demoralizing effect thus leading to, the person not exerting a wholehearted effort and accordingly it leads to a negative result or the person only focuses on something negative related to the event.

For instance, a soothsayer could make 10 predictions of which 3 of them seems to come true. In this case, some people might focus on 3 prophecies becoming true, instead of looking at the 7 prophecies which didn't and have the rest of the person's lifespan to come true; this is a selective focus on the cases that can be interpreted as a confirmation rather than looking at the wholeness.

How do divinations work? Cold & Warm reading

Clairvoyants exploit the abovementioned psychological phenomena combined with rhetorical tricks and manipulation by which they deceive their victims into believing, that they have access to knowledge which would be impossible to have access to unless they had supernatural powers. When this idea becomes plausible in the mind of the victim, it gives rise to the belief that the clairvoyant also has access to knowledge about the so-called spiritual world and future events.

The techniques of divinations are divided into cold and warm reading. There is a slight difference between the techniques; warm reading involves some preparation in the guise of research about the participants.

The beforementioned manipulation involves:

Employing aids for authenticity and setting the mood. Most people are influenced by the mood set around them; coziness with the family, energy boost by employing specific music genres during workout, a romantic atmosphere at during a candlelight dinner, a scary atmosphere when watching horror movies, etc.

Intercepting information one can pretend to have received by spirits or in another supernatural manner. People typically forget what information they've given someone if they haven't been in direct contact with them.

Ensuring one's abilities seem diffused, so there isn't anything concrete to measure. As mentioned before: The harder something is to measure, the harder it is to falsify. And if it's not measurable, then it's not falsifiable at all.

Placing the responsibility of one's guesses on the participants, so that it's impossible to blame one for one's wrong guesses: The participants are responsible for interpreting the information, one receives supernaturally.

Appearing self-confident since psychologically speaking it maintains the illusion about one is merely passing on information from something supernatural. Insecurity, mumbling, murmuring, and a questioning tone might break the illusion and make one appear guessing.

Questions are disguised as statements about the participant. One allows the participants to finish speaking and to direct the conversation which after the séance gives rise to the participant feeling that the clairvoyant informed the participant about numerous issues.

Deducing conclusions from the clothes and habits of the participants; restlessness, nervous, self-confident, easy by nature, and symbols giving away signals about what is important to the participant; religious symbols, symbols of love, etc.

Employing general formulations which fit most people ensuring correct hits in a lot of the statements, and various psychological phenomena ensure the participant focuses on the cases involving the correct guesses while forgetting the cases involving the wrong guesses.

Cold reading requires more improvisation than warm reading since some of the work is already undertaken as preparation when conducting warm reading by, for instance, an assistant receiving information about the participant or through databases with information about people.

The following is a recipe adapted from WikiHow on how to undertake cold reading:

1. Employ aids for setting the mood and take your time while reading.

Aids such as a crystal ball, coffee grounds in a cup, tarot cards, Zodiac signs, etc. helps one stall time in a natural and thus more convincing manner, while one says: *Wait, I see something here* while considering what to say.

2. If performing in front of an audience, then choose someone and observe the person for a while. Listen for something about the person's life that might be useful. When you're ready, then tell the person that you feel a special energy emanating from him or her, which is why you would like to begin with that person.

If you hear someone talking about their best, for instance, Mustafa, then employ this information by mentioning the name Mustafa during the reading, and likewise if you hear someone talking about their children, etc.

3. Be humble regarding your abilities, for instance: *I am able to intercept what is troubling people, and I receive knowledge about their problems in small bites. I can try my abilities on you and see if I can intercept something.*
4. The responsibility for you succeeding to intercept knowledge should be placed on the participants: It's their responsibility to make sense of the information, you provide them with. Thus, the allocation of responsibility places the burden on them: *The spirits give me information in mysterious ways, so it's up to you to make sense of them.*
5. Be confident about your reading, since the participants shall believe in you to a greater extent if you seem self-confident about what you are saying. When you make a wrong guess then say something like: *Are you sure it doesn't mean anything to you? Maybe you haven't figured out its importance to you yet.*
6. Disguise questions as statements. This technique is also known as fishing entailing you fishing for information until the participant takes the bait and confirms one of your statements.

For instance, if you say something like: *I see a necklace, and I wonder why.* If the participants don't react, then move on to the next statement, for instance: *I see a blurry picture of a white house, I wonder what that could mean?* Maybe the participant then would say, that his or her grandparents used to live in a white house, then build your reading on this information.

7. Ensure that the participant is the one doing most of the talking. If you make a correct guess during the reading, then hear the participant out, don't interrupt him or her. Remember, it's priceless when the participant speaks because then he or she reveals important things which you can employ in your reading to convince the participant about your supernatural abilities.
8. Pay attention to the clothes and habits of the participants. Employ these characteristics to deduce things about the participant. However, avoid concluding obvious conclusions; if the participant is wearing a soccer T-shirt, then don't say that you can feel that he or she loves soccer. Don't worry about your deductions being wrong, just carry on with the reading.

If the participant fiddles a lot with her hair and has a heart-shaped pendant, then say something like: *I sense, that you are a restless person, but you are at ease when you are with your true love.*

9. Employ general statements which usually fits people. This enables you to minimize the number of wrong hits. The participants should be doing most of the work in this case since he or she is the one trying to concretize your general statements in a manner that fits his or her life. Avoid too specific statements, unless they are based on the information you've obtained by fishing. You could say something like: As a child, you often felt sad and that nobody could understand you. This statement fits most people since most people have experienced being sad or misunderstood – so even though it's a general statement, the participant will interpret it as a specific statement related to him or her.
10. Lets the participant control the conversation. A lot of people show up to a reading with problems or wishes that burden them. If the participant is eager to talk about a particular issue or keeps bringing up a particular topic, then take the reading in that direction. The participant is more willing to believe you if you tell the participant what he or she wishes to hear. For instance, if the participant keeps bringing up his or her ex, then say something like: *You've experienced heartbreak not too long ago,*

and you find it hard to move on. Your latest relationship weighs heavily on your soul.

Astrologers employ Zodiac signs and the positions of the stars and planets instead of 'magic' or 'mystical' objects and exploit a lot of the same psychological phenomena, rhetorical tricks, and manipulation.

Others employ coffee grounds and coffee cups, tarot cards, palm reading, numerology, or dream interpretation – they all exploit the same basic principles.

Numerous studies show that clairvoyants aren't any better than other people at making predictions about the future – they might even be worse as mentioned by Vyse drawing on two studies undertaken by Barbero, Steiner & Shaeffer in 1995 with the title *Psychic's predictions (surprise!) fizzle for 1991* and Tuerkheimer & Vyse from 1997 with the title *The book of predictions: Fifteen years later*.

Conclusion

Only Allah ﷻ knows the future, and nobody can claim to know, that it was revealed to them through revelation, or that Jinn has informed or informs them about the future. It should be clear as the day, that the phenomenon divination with all its subcategories is mere superstition and a hoax.

Several Islamic texts conclusively prohibit visiting soothsayers and believing their claims. For instance:

من أتى كاهنا فصدقه بما يقول أو أتى امرأة في دبرها، فقد برئ مما أنزل على محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet said: If anyone resorts to a diviner and believes in what he says or has intercourse with his wife when she is menstruating or has intercourse with his wife through her anus, he has nothing to do with what has been sent down to Muhammad.” (Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi & Ibn Majah)

مَنْ أَتَى عَرَّافًا فَسَأَلَهُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ لَمْ تُقْبَلْ لَهُ صَلَاةُ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً

“Safiyya reported from some of the wives of the Messenger of Allah that the Messenger of Allah said: He who visits a diviner (‘Arraf) and asks him about anything, his prayers extending to forty nights will not be accepted.” (Muslim)

Jinn

The term Jinn is derived from the root JNN and denotes the meaning *something hidden* which is explained in *Lisan al-Arab*:

جنن: جَنَّ الشيءَ يَجْنُهُ جَنَّاً: سَتَرَهُ وَكَلَّ شَيْءٍ سَتَرَ عَنْكَ فَقَدْ جُنَّ عَنْكَ

Janan: To *janna* something; *yajunnahu jannan*: To conceal it. And everything that's hidden from you then it's *junna* from you.

A few more examples are mentioned; for instance, *ajannahu al-layl* means *the night covered (concealed) him*, *janin* is the *buried*, and *al-janaan* is *the heart which is concealed by the chest*, while *al-janan* is *the grave which conceals the deceased*, and the *Jinn* are named such, because they are concealed from the sight of man.

In *Sihab al-Lughab* by al-Jawhari the following explanations are given:

والجَانُّ: أَبُو الْجِنِّ، وَالْجَمْعُ جِنَّانٌ. وَالْجَانُّ أَيْضاً: حَيَّةٌ بَيْضَاءُ.

And *al-jaan*: The father of the *Jinn*. And *al-jaan* can also mean: A white snake.

Numerous other meanings are mentioned all related to something hidden or concealed.

In the Qur'an we also find the word being with different meanings. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا ﴾

"So, when the night over-shadowed (*janna*) him, he saw a star." (6:76)

﴿ وَالْجَانَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ مِنْ نَارِ السَّمُومِ ﴾

"And the *Jinn (al-jaan)* We created before, of intensely hot fire." (15:27)

﴿ وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَّارِجٍ مِنْ نَارٍ ﴾

"And He created the *Jinn (al-jaan)* of a flame of fire." (55:15)

﴿ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴾

“So, on that day neither man nor Jinni (*jaan*) shall be asked about his sin.” (55:39)

﴿ فِيهِنَّ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴾

“There will be bashful maidens untouched by mankind or jinn (*al-jaan*) before.” (55:56)

﴿ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴾

“untouched by Jinn (*al-jaan*) or mankind before.” (55:74)

﴿ فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّى مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ﴾

“So, when he saw it in motion as if it were a serpent (*jaan*), he turned back retreating.” (27:10)

﴿ فَلَمَّا رَأَاهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّى مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ﴾

“So, when he saw it in motion as if it were a serpent (*jaan*), he turned back retreating.” (28:31)

Whereas, in other verses of the Qur'an the word *hayyah* is used about snakes:

﴿ فَأَلْقَاهَا فَإِذَا هِيَ حَيَّةٌ تَسْعَى ﴾

“So he cast it down; and lo! it was a serpent (*hayyah*) running.” (20:20)

And in other verses the word *thu'baan* is used:

﴿ فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُبِينٌ ﴾

” So he threw his rod, then lo! It was a clear serpent. (*thu'baan*).” (7:107)

﴿ فَأَلْقَى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُبِينٌ ﴾

“So he cast down his rod, and lo! it was an obvious serpent (*thu'baan*).” (26:32)

The idea of the existence of Jinn predates Islam and accordingly a lot of pre-Islamic superstition has, wrongfully, been attached to the idea of Jinn.

A well-known verse by Dhu ar-Rummah describes how Jinn sound:

للجن في حافاتها زجل كما تناوح يوم الريح عيشوم
 “The Jinn buzz on their borders, as were they
 moaning trees on a windy day.”

The Arabs feared evil spirits like other peoples in the surrounding areas did. Some of the Arabs tribes even worshipped Jinn. Ibn Kathir writes in his *tafsir* of the verse where Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ ﴾

“(Some) people considered the Jinn to be equal to God even though God created them.” (6:100)

هذا رد على المشركين، الذين عبدوا مع الله غيره، وأشركوا في عبادته، أن عبدوا الجن، فجعلوهم شركاء له في العبادة، تعالى الله عن شركهم وكفرهم فإن قيل فكيف عبدت الجن، مع أنهم إنما كانوا يعبدون الأصنام؟ فالجواب أنهم ما عبدوها، إلا عن طاعة الجن، وأمرهم إياهم بذلك، كقوله { إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنْتَا وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا لَّعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَا تُخِذْ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ نَصِيْبًا مَّفْرُوضًا وَلَا ضِلَّكُمْ وَلَا تَنْتَهِهُمْ وَلَا تُخِذْ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مَنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُبِينًا يَعْبُدُهُمْ وَيُتَمَنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا } (النساء: 117-120) وكقوله تعالى { أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِي } الآية وقال إبراهيم لأبيه { يَا أَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِيًّا } (مريم: 44) وكقوله { أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَبْنَى آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ وَأَنْ أَعْبُدُونِي هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ } (يس: 60-61) وتقول الملائكة يوم القيامة { سُبْحَنَكَ أَنْتَ وَلِيْنَا مِنْ دُونِهِمْ بَلْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ الْجِنَّ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِهِمْ مُؤْمِنُونَ } (سبا 41) ولهذا قال تعالى { وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ } أي وقد خلقهم، فهو الخالق وحده لا شريك له، فكيف يعبد معه غيره، كقول إبراهيم { أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْجُونَ وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ } (الصافات 95-96) ومعنى الآية، أنه سبحانه وتعالى هو المستقل بالخلق وحده، فلهذا يجب أن يفرد بالعبادة، وحده لا شريك له

“The verse is a refutation of the idol worshippers who worshipped others besides Allah and associated Jinn with Him with regards to worship. Exalted be He above their association and disbelief. If someone should ask just how the idol worshippers worshipped the

Jinn when they were merely idol worshippers, the answer would be: They worshipped the idols by obeying the Jinn who ordered them to do so. Allah said in other verses:

﴿ إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنْتَا وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا - لَعَنَهُ اللَّهُ وَقَالَ لَأَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا - وَلَا ضِلَّتْهُمْ وَلَا ضَلَّتْهُمْ وَلَا مَنِيَّتْهُمْ وَلَا مَرَّتْهُمْ فَلْيَتَّكُنْ آذَانَ الْإِنْعَمِ وَلَا مَرَّتْهُمْ فَلْيَغَيِّرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مَنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُبِينًا - يَعِدُهُمْ وَيُمْنِيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴾

"They do not call besides Him on anything but idols, and they do not call on anything but a rebellious devil. Allah has cursed him; and he said: Most certainly I will take of Thy servants an appointed portion: And most certainly I will lead them astray, excite in them vain desires, and bid them so that they shall slit the ears of the cattle, and most certainly I will bid them so that they shall alter Allah's creation; and whoever takes the Shaitan for a guardian rather than Allah he indeed shall suffer a manifest loss. He gives them promises and excites vain desires in them; and the Shaitan does not promise them but to deceive." (4:117-120)

﴿ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِي ﴾

"What! Would you then take him and his offspring for friends rather than Me?" (18:50)

Ibrahim عليه السلام said to his father:

﴿ يَا أَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِيًّا ﴾

"O, my father! Serve not Shaitan, surely Shaitan is disobedient to the Beneficent Allah." (19:44)

Allah said:

﴿ أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ بَيْنِي ءَادَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ وَإِنْ اعْبُدُونِي هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴾

"O Children of Adam did We not command you not to worship satan. He is your sworn enemy. Did We not command you to worship Me and tell you that this is the straight path?" (36:60-61)

On the Day of Judgement, the angels shall declare:

﴿سُبْحَنَكَ أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِنْ دُونِهِمْ بَلْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ الْجِنَّ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِهِمْ مُؤْمِنُونَ﴾

“Glory be to Thee! Thou art our Guardian, not they, nay! They worshipped the Jinn; most of them were believers in them.” (34:41)

This is why Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ﴾

“(Some) people considered the Jinn to be equal to God even though God created them.” (6:100)

Alone, without partners. Accordingly, how can any other god be worshipped besides Him, as Ibrahim عليه السلام said:

﴿قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْجُونَ وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“He said: What! Do you worship what you hew out when Allah has created you and what you make?” (37:95-96)

Allah alone is the creator without partners. This is why He deserves to be worshipped without associating anyone with Him.” – End of quote.

In the following, we'll have a look at the terminological confusion that sometimes occurs regarding the words Jinn and Satan.

The difference between Jinn and Satan

Sometimes, there is confusion regarding different texts due to the words Jinn and *shaytan*. We have been informed that 3 thinking creatures exist; angels created by light, man created by clay, and Jinn created by fire.

We have been informed that Iblees was a Jinni:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ﴾

“And when We said to the angels to prostrate in front of Adam; they all obeyed except Iblis. He was of the Jinn, and he transgressed the commandment of his Lord.” (18:50)

Which some scholars understood as the creature Jinn, while other scholars understood it as a tribe of angels called Jinn. Notwithstanding, what Iblees is, the word *shaytan* is typically a reference to him when it's definite الشيطان, i.e., the devil known as Satan, while *shaytan* شيطان meaning *a devil* when it's indefinite can be a reference to both man and Jinn.

Allah ﷻ says:

﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا ﴾

“And thus, did We make for every prophet an enemy, the *shayateen* from among men and Jinn, some of them suggesting to others varnished falsehood to deceive.” (6:112)

It becomes more apparent through the following narrations:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا مَرَّ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ أَحَدِكُمْ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ يُصَلِّي فَلْيَمْنَعْهُ، فَإِنْ أَبَى فَلْيَمْنَعْهُ، فَإِنْ أَبَى فَلْيُقَاتِلْهُ، فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ شَيْطَانٌ

“Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrated that the Prophet said: "If while you are praying, somebody intends to pass in front of you, prevent him; and should he insist, prevent him again; and if he insists again, fight with him, because he is a devil (*shaytan*).” (al-Bukhari)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ وَكَلَّنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِحِفْظِ زَكَاةِ رَمَضَانَ، فَأَتَانِي آتٍ، فَجَعَلَ يَخْفُو مِنَ الطَّعَامِ، فَأَخَذْتُهُ فَقُلْتُ لَأَرْفَعَنَّكَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَذَكَرَ الْحَدِيثَ فَقَالَ إِذَا أُوْتِيتَ إِلَى فَرَاشِكَ فَأَقْرَأْ آيَةَ الْكُرْسِيِّ لَنْ يَزَالَ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَافِظٌ، وَلَا يَقْرُبَكَ شَيْطَانٌ حَتَّى تُصْبِحَ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَدَقَ وَهُوَ كَذُوبٌ، ذَاكَ شَيْطَانٌ

“Abu Huraira said: “The Messenger of Allah put me in charge of the Zakat of Ramadan (i.e., Zakat-ul-Fitr). Someone came to me and started scooping some of the foodstuffs of (Zakat) with both hands. I caught him and told him that I would take him to the Messenger of

Allah.’ Then Abu Huraira told the whole narration and added: ‘He (i.e., the thief) said: ‘Whenever you go to your bed, recite the Verse of ‘al-Kursi’ (2.255) for then a guardian from Allah will be guarding you, and a devil will not approach you till dawn.’ On that, the Prophet said, ‘He told you the truth, though he is a liar, this devil (dhaaka shaytan).’” (al-Bukhari)

In these examples it is clear that a human being can be termed a devil (shaytan); for instance, thieves and people who try to disturb someone who is praying.

What do we know about Jinn?

The authentic, Islamic texts don’t inform us much about the Jinn, except that they exist, were created from fire, and can influence us by whispering – without any details as to how they whisper to us.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿قُلْ أُوجِبِي إِلَىٰ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا ۝١﴾ يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا أَحَدًا ۝٢﴾ وَأَنَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا ۝٣﴾ وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَفُولُ سَفِيهًا عَلَى اللَّهِ شَطَطًا ۝٤﴾ وَأَنَا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نَقُولَ الْإِنسَ وَالْجِنَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۝٥﴾ وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْإِنسِ يَعُوذُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا ۝٦﴾ وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّنْ يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا ۝٧﴾ وَأَنَا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مَلِئَتْ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهُبًا ۝٨﴾ وَأَنَا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ ۖ فَمَنْ يَسْمَعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا ۝٩﴾ وَأَنَا لَا نَذَرُ أَشْرًا أُريدَ بِمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا ۝١٠﴾ وَأَنَا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِمَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قِدْدًا ۝١١﴾ وَأَنَا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نُعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَنْ نُّعْجزَهُ هَرَبًا ۝١٢﴾ وَأَنَا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَىٰ آمَنَّا بِهِ ۖ فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا ۝١٣﴾ وَأَنَا مِنَّا الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ ۖ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا ۝١٤﴾ وَأَمَا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا ۝١٥﴾ وَأَن لَّوِ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَهُمْ مَّاءً غَدَقًا ۝١٦﴾

“Say: ‘It has been revealed to me that a party of Jinn has listened (to the recitation) of the Quran and has told (their people): ‘We heard an amazing reading which guides people to the right path, and we believe in it. We shall never consider anyone equal to our Lord; our Lord is too exalted to have either a wife or son. The dimwit one among us has been telling confused lies about Allah. We thought that no man or Jinn could

ever tell lies about Allah. Certain human beings sought refuge with certain Jinn, and this increased the rebelliousness of those Jinn. Those people thought, like you, that Allah would never send down a Messenger. We went near the heavens but found it to be full of strong guards and shooting flames. We used to sit nearby and try to listen to the heavens, but shooting flames now await those who try to do that. We do not know whether by this arrangement Allah intends benefit and guidance for the people of the earth or only evil. As for us, some of us are righteous, and others are not. We have all followed different ways. We knew that we could never challenge Allah whether we stayed on earth or fled elsewhere. Now that we have listened to the guidance, we believe in it. Whoever believes in his Lord does not need to fear loss or oppression. Some of us are Muslims, and some of us have deviated from the Truth. Whoever has embraced Islam has followed the right guidance. However, the deviators from the Truth will be the fuel for hell.' Had they remained steadfast in their religion, We would certainly have given them abundant water to drink."

The Prophet ﷺ was ordered through the Qur'an to inform us that it was revealed to him ﷺ that some Jinn talked about the Qur'an, i.e., he ﷺ didn't see them himself which is only natural since they are hidden creatures. Allah ﷻ reminds us in the Koran that the companions of Satan (from amongst the Jinn) see us, but we can't see them:

﴿ إِنَّهُ يَرَاكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ ﴾

"Verily, Satan and those like him see you, but you do not see them."
(7:27)

Ibn 'Abbas confirmed this fact in a lengthy narration which begins with:

مَا قَرَأَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى الْجِنِّ وَلَا رَأَهُمْ ...

"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not recite to the Jinn, and he didn't see them ..." (at-Tirmidhi & Muslim)

Some Muslims mistakenly believe that the Prophet ﷺ met the Jinn, saw them, and spoke to them due to some narrations. Regarding 3 of them al-Haithami wrote in his work titled *Majma' az-Zawa'id*:

عن عبد الله بن مسعود قال: بينما نحن مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بمكة وهو في نفر من أصحابه إذ قال: ليقم معي رجل منكم ولا يقوم معي رجل في قلبه من الغش مثقال ذرة قال: فقممت معه فأخذت الإداوة ولا أحسبها إلا ماء، فخرجت مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى إذ كنا بأعلى مكة رأيت أسورة مجتمعة قال: فخط لي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خطاً ثم قال: "قم ههنا حتى آتيك فقممت ومضى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إليهم فرأيتهم يثورون إليه قال: فسمر معهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليلاً طويلاً، حتى جاءني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال لي: ما زلت قائماً يا ابن مسعود؟ قلت له: يا رسول الله أو لم تقل لي: قم حتى آتيك؟ قال: ثم قال لي: "هل معك من وضوء؟ قال: فقلت: نعم. قال: ففتحت الأداوة فإذا هو نبيذ قال: فقلت: له يا رسول الله والله لقد أخذت الإداوة ولا أحسبها إلا ماء فإذا هو نبيذ قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ثمرة طيبة وماء طهور قال: ثم توضأ منها فلما قام يصلي أدركه شخصان منهم، فقالا: يا رسول الله إنا نحب أن تؤمنا في صلاتنا، قال: فصفهما رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خلفه ثم صلى بنا، فلما انصرف قلت: يا رسول الله من هؤلاء؟ قال: هؤلاء جن نصيبين جاءوني يختصمون في أمور كانت بينهم وقد سألوني الزاد فزودتهم قال: فقلت له: وهل عندك يا رسول الله شيء تزودهم إياه؟ قال: قد زودتهم الرجعة وما وجدوا من روث وجدوه شعيراً وما وجدوا من عظم وجدوه كاسياً قال: فعند ذلك نهى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن أن يستطاب بالعظم والروث

قلت: رواه أبو داود وغيره باختصار ورواه أحمد وفيه أبو زيد مولى عمرو بن حريث وهو مجهول "Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud narrated: 'We were in Mecca with the Prophet ﷺ, and he said: 'Let one amongst you go with me, but he shouldn't have any treason in his heart. He said: 'So, I grabbed a vessel, which I thought only contained water. I then went with the Messenger of Allah, until we reached the highest point in Mecca where I saw some circles, he said: 'The Messenger of Allah instructed me, and then he said: 'Wait here until I come to you.' I waited, and the Messenger of Allah went to them, and I saw them moving towards him.' He said: 'The Messenger of Allah then talked to them for a long night until he came to me and said: 'O Ibn Mas'ud, have you been here all the time?' I replied: 'O Messenger of Allah, didn't you say: 'Stay here?' He asked: 'Are you in a state of purity? (wudhu).' I replied: 'Yes.' He opened the vessel, and it contained *nabidh* (a beverage).' I said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah, I grabbed the vessel thinking it contained water, and it turned out to be nabidh.' The Messenger of Allah said: 'Dates are good, and water is

pure.' Then he washed himself with it. When he stood up to pray, I noticed two people who were with him.' They said: 'O Messenger of Allah, we would like you to confirm our prayer.' They then stood behind the Messenger of Allah and prayed with us. When we were done, I asked: 'O Messenger of Allah, who are these?' He replied: 'These are Nasibian Jinn. They came to me concerning their affairs, and they asked me for food, so I provided it for them.' I asked him: 'O Messenger of Allah, did you have anything to provide them with?' He replied: 'I permitted them to eat whatever they find of dung, barley, bones, and glass.' And thus, the Messenger of Allah prohibited cleaning oneself with bones and dung.'

I say: It was narrated by Abu Dawud and others in abridged versions. And Ahmad narrated it. In the chain of narration, we find Abu Zaid Mawla 'Amru Bin Harith, and he is unknown (majhul)." (Majma' az-Zawa'id)

وعنه قال: أتانا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: إني قد أمرت أن أقرأ على إخوانكم من الجن فليقم معي رجل، ولا يقيم رجل في قلبه مثقال حبة من كبر فقامت معه فأخذت الإداوة فيها نبيذ، فانطلقت فلما برز خط لي خطأ وقال: لا تخرج منه فإنك إن خرجت منه لم ترني ولا أراك إلى يوم القيامة قال: فانطلق وتوارى عني لم أره، فلما سطع الفجر أقبل فقال لي: أراك قائماً؟ فقلت: ما قعدت، فقال: ما عليك لو فعلت؟ قلت: خشيت أن أخرج منه قال: أما إنك لو خرجت [منه] لم ترني ولم أراك إلى يوم القيامة، هل معك وضوء؟ قلت: لا قال: ما هذه الإداوة قلت: فيها نبيذ قال: ثمرة طيبة وماء طهور فتوضأ وأقام الصلاة فلما قضى الصلاة قام إليه رجلان من الجن فسألاه الطعام قال: ألم آمر لكما ولقومكما بما يصلحكما؟ قالوا: بلى ولكن أحببنا أن يشهد بعضنا معك الصلاة. قال: فمن أنتما؟ قالوا: نحن من أهل نصيبين، قال: قد أفلح هذان وأفلح قومهما فأمر لهما بالروث والعظام طعاماً ولحمًا فذكر الحديث

رواه الطبراني وفيه أبو زيد وقيس بن الربيع أيضاً وقد ضعفه جماعة

"Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud narrated: 'The Messenger of Allah came to us and said: 'I have been ordered to recite in front of your brothers amongst the Jinn, so let one of you go with me. And it shouldn't be a person who has any arrogance in his heart.' I then went with him and grabbed a vessel containing nabidh. While I was walking, he instructed me: 'If you leave this place, then you won't see me, and I won't see you on the Day of Judgement.' Then he left and disappeared, I couldn't see

him. At dawn, I met him, and he said: 'I see you standing here?' So, I replied: 'I didn't sit down.' He asked: 'What caused you to remain standing?' I replied: 'I feared to leave this place.' He said: 'If you had left this place, then you wouldn't see me, and I wouldn't see you on the Day of Judgement. Are you in a state of purity?' I replied: 'No.' He asked: 'What is inside this vessel?' I replied: 'It contains nabidh.' He said: 'Dates are good, and water is pure.' Then he washed himself and stood up for prayer. After the prayer, two men from the Jinn came to him and asked for food. He said: 'Should I not order for you and your people, what is good for you?' They replied: 'Yes, however, we would like that some of us experienced praying with you.' He said: 'Who are you?' They replied: 'We are from the people of Nasibin.' He said: 'These two shall attain success, and their people shall attain success.' Then he ordered them dung and bones as food and meat.' Then he mentioned the narration.

Narrated by at-Tabarani, and in the chain of narration we find Abu Zaid and also Qais Bin ar-Rabi', and a group declared him weak." (Majma' az-Zawa'id)

وعن عبد الله بن مسعود أيضاً قال: استتبعني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليلة الجن فانطلقت معه حتى بلغنا أعلى مكة فخط لي خطأ وقال: لا تبرح ثم انصاع في أجبال الجن، فرأيت الرجال ينحدرون عليه من رؤوس الجبال حتى حالوا بيني وبينه فاخترطت السيف وقلت: لأضربن حتى أستنقذ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ثم ذكرت قوله: لا تبرح حتى آتيك قال: فلم أزل كذلك حتى أضاء الفجر، فجاء النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وأنا قائم فقال: ما زلت على حالك؟ قلت: لو لبثت شهراً ما برحت حتى تأتيني، ثم أخبرته بما أردت أن أصنع فقال: لو خرجت ما التقينا أنا وأنت إلى يوم القيامة ثم شبك أصابعه في أصابعي ثم قال: إني وعدت أن يؤمن بي الإنس والجن، فأما الإنس فقد آمنتم بي وأما الجن فقد رأيت قال: وما أظن أجلي إلا قد اقترب قلت: يا رسول الله ألا تستخلف أبا بكر؟ فأعرض عني فرأيت أنه لم يوافق فقلت: يا رسول الله ألا تستخلف عمر؟ فأعرض عني فرأيت أنه لم يوافق فقلت: يا رسول الله ألا تستخلف علياً؟ قال: ذاك والذي لا إله إلا هو إن بايعتموه وأطعتموه أدخلكم الجنة أكتعين

رواه الطبراني وفيه يحيى بن يعلى الأسلمي وهو ضعيف

"Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud also narrated: 'The Messenger of Allah asked me to accompany him on the Night of the Jinn, so I went with him

until we reached the highest point in Mecca, where he instructed me and said: 'Don't leave.' Then he left into the mountains of the Jinn. I saw men descending from the mountain tops towards him until they were between him and me. I drew my sword and said: 'Let them strike me, as long as I'm looking out for the Messenger of Allah.' Then I remembered the instruction: 'Don't leave until I come to you.' So, I stayed there until dawn. And the Messenger of Allah came to me, and he said: 'Have you been standing all this time?' I replied: 'If I had to, I would have stood up for a month. I told, what I had thought about.' He said: 'If you had left this place, then we wouldn't be reunited on the Day of Judgement.' He then merged his fingers with mine and said: 'I've been promised that both men and Jinn will believe in me. As for men, they already believe in me. And as for Jinn, I've seen them.' He said: 'And I don't think about my time, except that it draws near.' I asked: 'O Messenger of Allah, haven't you chosen Abu Bakr?' He turned away from me, and I found that he didn't agree. I then asked: 'O Messenger of Allah, haven't you chosen 'Umar?' He turned away from me, and I found that he didn't agree. So, I asked: 'O Messenger of Allah, haven't you chosen 'Ali?' He replied: 'This one, and by the One besides Whom there isn't any Gods, if you pledge alliance to him and obey him, then you shall enter the Paradise crippled.'

Narrated by at-Tabarani and in the chain of narration we find Yahya Bin Ya'la al-Aslami, and he is weak." (Majma' az-Zawa'id)

These three narrations should, therefore, be rejected.

The following narration is the most lucid narration about the incident that shows from what perspective the incident should be understood:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، قَالَ قَدِمَ وَفْدُ الْجِنِّ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالُوا يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنَّهُ أَمَّتْكَ أَنْ يَسْتَنْجُوا بِعَظْمٍ أَوْ رَوْثَةٍ أَوْ حُمَمَةٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى جَعَلَ لَنَا فِيهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ فَتَنَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ ذَلِكَ

"Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud narrated: 'A hidden delegation came to the Prophet and said: 'O Muhammad, forbid your community to cleanse themselves with a bone, dung, or charcoal, for in them Allah has provided sustenance for us.' So, the Prophet forbade them to do so.'" (Abu Dawud)

The term الرزق *rizq* includes money, food, wealth, etc., and one's livelihood can be described as a source of one's rizq. In this regard, in the past bones were used to write on, and camel dung was used for fuel. Robert G. Hoyland describes the development of the economy and the central role of pastoralism for the production of food in the book *Arabia and the Arabs*:

"From its earliest beginnings in the eighth millennium BC, pastoralism has witnessed a number of developments. One was the realisation that animals could be exploited not just for their ultimate consumption as meat, but for a whole range of secondary products: milk, wool, hair, hide, labour, transport and so on. This was probably a long process, with some items, such as milk, being recognised fairly early on and others, such as transport, only capitalised on much later. A second development was the gradual emergence of an exchange-based economy, which inaugurated a shift in pastoralist interests from producing food solely for their own households to providing commodities for customers as well. This went hand in hand with the rise of cities and states, whose non-food-producing residents (craftsmen, bureaucrats, soldiers and managers) encouraged or compelled food-producers to think about generating products with the best market value. Examples are the selection for woolly and fat-tailed sheep and the enhancement through simple breeding programmes of milk yield from cattle, sheep and goats.

The most significant advance in pastoralism for Arabia was the domestication of the one-humped camel, a process that was probably begun in southeast Arabia in the third millennium BC. It was very likely exploited first for its dung, burnt as fuel, and its milk and flesh, consumed for sustenance." – end of quote.

عَنْ سَلْمَانَ، قَالَ قَالَ لَهُ بَعْضُ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَهُمْ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ بِهِ إِنِّي أَرَى صَاحِبَكُمْ يُعَلِّمُكُمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى الْخِرَاءَةِ قَالَ أَجَلُ أَمْرِنَا أَنْ لَا نَسْتَقْبِلَ الْقَبِيلَةَ وَأَنْ لَا نَسْتَنْجِيَ بِأَيْمَانِنَا وَلَا نَكْتَفِي بِدُونِ ثَلَاثَةِ أَحْجَارٍ لَيْسَ فِيهَا رَجِيعٌ وَلَا عَظْمٌ

"Salman said that one of the idol-worshippers said whilst mocking him: 'I see that your companion is teaching you everything, even how to relieve yourselves?' He said: 'Yes indeed. He has ordered us not to face the Qiblah nor to clean ourselves with our right hands, and not to be

content with anything less than three stones, which are not to include any excrement or bones.” (Ibn Majah)

Whereas the following narration and others like it have contributed to the confusion:

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُجْرٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ إِبرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ دَاوُدَ، عَنِ الشَّعْبِيِّ، عَنْ عَلْقَمَةَ، قَالَ قُلْتُ لِابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ هَلْ صَحِبَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَيْلَةً الْجِنِّ مِنْكُمْ أَحَدٌ قَالَ مَا صَحِبَهُ مِنَّا أَحَدٌ وَلَكِنْ قَدْ افْتَقَدْنَاهُ ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ وَهُوَ بِمَكَّةَ فَقَلْنَا اغْتِيلَ أَوْ اسْتَطِيرَ مَا فَعَلَ بِهِ فَبِتْنَا بِشَرِّ لَيْلَةٍ بَاتَ بِهَا قَوْمٌ حَتَّى إِذَا أَصْبَحْنَا أَوْ كَانَ فِي وَجْهِ الصُّبْحِ إِذَا نَحْنُ بِهِ يَجِيءُ مِنْ قِبَلِ حِرَاءَ قَالَ فَذَكَّرُوا لَهُ الَّذِي كَانُوا فِيهِ فَقَالَ أَتَانِي دَاعِي الْجِنِّ فَأَتَيْتُهُمْ فَقَرَأْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ فَأَنْطَلَقَ فَأَرَانَا آثَارَهُمْ وَآثَارَ نِيرَانِهِمْ قَالَ الشَّعْبِيُّ وَسَلَوَهُ الرَّادَ وَكَانُوا مِنْ جِنِّ الْجَرِيرَةِ فَقَالَ كُلُّ عَظْمٍ لَمْ يُذَكَّرْ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ يَقَعُ فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ أَوْفَرَ مَا كَانَ لَحْمًا وَكُلُّ بَعْرَةٍ أَوْ رَوْثَةٍ عُلِفَتْ لِدَوَابِّكُمْ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلَا تَسْتَنْجُوا بِهِمَا فَإِنَّهُمَا زَادَا إِخْوَانَكُمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ

“Ash-Sha’bi narrated, that ‘Alqamah said: ‘I asked Ibn Mas’ud, may Allah be pleased with him: ‘Did any of you accompany the Prophet on the Night of the Jinn?’ He replied: ‘None of us accompanied him. One night, while he was in Makkah, we could not find him. We said: ‘He has been murdered [or] snatched, what has happened to him?’ So, we spent the worst night a people could spend until the morning’ or ‘it was about dawn when we saw him coming from the direction of Hira.’ He said: ‘They told him about what they had gone through.’ So, he said: ‘I received a hidden invitation, so I went to them to recite for them.’ He said: ‘So we went and saw their tracks and the traces of their campfire.’ Ash-Sha’bi said: ‘They asked him about their provisions - and they were Jinns of Mesopotamia - so he said: ‘Every bone upon which Allah’s name has not been mentioned, that falls into your hands, and every dropping of dung is fodder for your beasts.’ So the Messenger of Allah said: ‘Do not perform Istinja with them for indeed they are provisions for your brothers among the Jinns.’” (at-Tirmidhi)

This narration has been twisted due to the addition at the end by ash-Sha’bi which can’t be traced back to Ibn Mas’ud nor the Prophet ﷺ according to *sharh* to the collection of at-Tirmidhi titled *Tuhfah al-Ahwadhi* by al-Mubarakpuri:

قال الدارقطني انتهى حديث ابن مسعود عند قوله فأرانا آثارهم وآثار نيرانهم وما بعده من قول الشعبي ، كذا رواه أصحاب داود الراوي عن الشعبي وابن عليّة وابن زريع وابن أبي زائدة وابن إدريس وغيرهم ، هكذا قاله الدارقطني وغيره ومعنى قوله : إنه من كلام الشعبي ؛ أنه ليس مروياً عن ابن مسعود بهذا الحديث وإلا فالشعبي لا يقول هذا الكلام إلا بتوقيف عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

“Ad-Darqutni said the narration from Ibn Mas’ud ends at *So we went and saw their tracks and the traces of their campfire*, while what follows is an addition by ash-Sha’bi, the same applies to what was narrated by the companions of Dawud from ash-Sha’bi, Ibn ‘Aliyah, Ibn Zura’i, Ibn Zaydah, Ibn Idris, and others. This is what ad-Darqutni and others said. What is meant by it being an addition by ash-Sha’bi is that it isn’t narrated by Ibn Mas’ud, and that ash-Sha’bi made an addition without a chain back to the Prophet ﷺ.”

Without the addition, it’s clear that the narration is about the Prophet ﷺ meeting with human beings, which is why there were traces and a camp. But the story about a meeting between Jinn and the Prophet ﷺ had spread to the extent that there are weak narrations about it which might explain how the story crept into the collection of al-Bukhari.

There is one isolated narration which indicates that the Profeten ﷺ met Jinn which has a *sahih* chain of narration:

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُو بْنُ يَحْيَى بْنِ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي جَدِّي، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ كَانَ يَحْمِلُ مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِدَاوَةَ لَوْضُوئِهِ وَحَاجَتِهِ، فَبَيْنَمَا هُوَ يَتْبَعُهُ بِهَا فَقَالَ مَنْ هَذَا فَقَالَ أَنَا أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ فَقَالَ ابْنِي أَحْجَارًا أَسْتَنْفِضُ بِهَا، وَلَا تَأْتِنِي بِعَظْمٍ وَلَا بِرَوْثَةٍ فَأَتَيْتُهُ بِأَحْجَارٍ أَحْمِلُهَا فِي طَرَفِ ثَوْبِي حَتَّى وَضَعْتُ إِلَى جَنْبِهِ ثُمَّ انْصَرَفْتُ، حَتَّى إِذَا فَرَغَ مَشَيْتُ، فَقُلْتُ مَا بَالُ الْعَظْمِ وَالرَّوْثَةِ قَالَ هُمَا مِنْ طَعَامِ الْجِنِّ، وَإِنَّهُ أَتَانِي وَفَدُّ جِنَّ نَصِيبِينَ وَنِعَمَ الْجِنِّ، فَسَأَلُونِي الزَّادَ، فَدَعَوْتُ اللَّهَ لَهُمْ أَنْ لَا يَمُرُّوا بِعَظْمٍ وَلَا بِرَوْثَةٍ إِلَّا وَجَدُوا عَلَيْهَا طَعَامًا

“Abu Hurairah narrated that once he was in the company of the Prophet carrying a water pot for his ablution and for cleaning his private parts. While he was following him carrying it (i.e., the pot), the Prophet asked: ‘Who is this?’ He said: ‘I am Abu Hurairah.’ The Prophet said: ‘Bring me stones in order to clean my private parts, and

do not bring any bones or animal dung.' Abu Hurairah went on narrating: 'So I brought some stones, carrying them in the corner of my robe till I put them by his side and went away. When he finished, I walked with him and asked: 'What about the bone and the animal dung?' He said: 'They are of the food of Jinns. A group of Jinns of (the city of) Nasibin came to me, and how nice those Jinns were, and asked me for the remains of the human food. I invoked Allah for them that they would never pass by a bone or animal dung but find food on them.'" (al-Bukhari)

There are numerous problems with this narration:

- 1) It conflicts with the narration from Ibn 'Abbas ؓ in which he says that the Prophet ﷺ didn't meet Jinn nor recite for them.
- 2) Abu Hurairah ؓ used to confuse who he had heard the narrations from.
- 3) It conflicts with reality.

The chain of narration is singular without any corroborating reports or narrators; we only have Musa Bin Isma'il's word for that he heard the narration from 'Amru Bin Yahya Bin Sa'id. And if that's true, then we only have 'Amrus word for that he heard the narration from his grandfather. And if that's true, then we only have his grandfather's word for that he heard the narration from Abu Hurairah. And if that's true then we only Abu Hurairah's word for that he experienced and heard what he narrated.

Ibn Taymiyyah tried to explain the conflict between the narration by Ibn 'Abbas ؓ and the one by Abu Hurairah ؓ, he writes in his *Majmu' al-Fatawa*, vol 19:

وقد ثبت في الصحيحين عن ابن عباس أنه كان يقول: إن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لم ير الجن ولا خاطبهم ولكن أخبره أنهم سمعوا القرآن وابن عباس قد علم ما دل عليه القرآن من ذلك ولم يعلم ما علمه ابن مسعود وأبو هريرة وغيرهما من إتيان الجن إليه ومخاطبته إياهم
 "It has already been proven through the two *sahih* (al-Bukhari and Muslim), that Ibn 'Abbas used to say that the Prophet ﷺ didn't see Jinn and nor did he address them, rather he was informed that they listened to the Qur'an. Ibn 'Abbas knew what the Qur'an says in this regard,

but he didn't know what Ibn Mas'ud, Abu Hurairah, and others besides the two knew; that Jinn came to him, and that he addressed them."

But the case actually is that Ibn Taymiyyah didn't know what we know about the narration by Ibn Mas'ud ؓ; that the conflicting addition is an addition made by ash-Sha'bi as mentioned before which is why the explanation provided by Ibn Taymiyyah isn't correct.

Abu Hurairah ؓ narrated quite many narrations from and about the Prophet ﷺ, and some few of them aren't narrated by corroborating narrators. But in the cases where he is the sole narrator one can't ignore his bad memory with regards to narrators.

In the work titled *Siyar A'lam*, vol 4, adh-Dhahabi writes that Abu Hurairah ؓ used to confuse who he had heard the narrations from. Adh-Dhahabi, however, doesn't regard it as a problem due to the assumption that when a companion of the Prophet confuses who he has heard the narration from he must have heard it from another companion who is just and credible. He quotes Shi'bah:

قال يزيد بن هارون سمعت شعبة يقول كان أبو هريرة يذلس

"Yazid Bin Harun said: I heard Shi'bah say: Abu Hurairah used to confuse (narrators)."

And the quotes Ibrahim, even though he disagrees with him:

إبراهيم قال ما كانوا يأخذون من حديث أبي هريرة إلا ما كان حديث جنة أو نار

"... Ibrahim said: They (my companions) didn't use to accept narrations by Abu Hurairah unless they were about Paradise and Hell."

The credibility of Abu Hurairah has been questioned throughout history by certain camps who categorized him as a liar. This, however, doesn't have a strong justification.

His memory was also debated. There is a narration where he himself explained that he had a bad memory:

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ أَبِي بَكْرٍ أَبُو مُصْعَبٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ دِينَارٍ، عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي ذُئْبٍ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ الْمَقْبُرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنِّي أَسْمَعُ مِنْكَ حَدِيثًا كَثِيرًا أَنْسَاهُ قَالَ ابْسُطْ رِدَاءَكَ فَبَسَطْتُهُ قَالَ فَعَرَفَ بِيَدَيْهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ ضُمَّهُ فَضَمَّمْتُهُ فَمَا نَسِيتُ شَيْئًا بَعْدَهُ

“Abu Hurairah narrated: ‘I said to Allah’s Messenger ‘I hear many narrations (Hadiths) from you, but I forget them.’ Allah’s Apostle said, ‘Spread your Rida’ (garment).’ I did accordingly, and then he moved his hands as if filling them with something (and emptied them in my Rida’) and then said, ‘Take and wrap this sheet over your body.’ I did it, and after that, I never forgot anything.” (al-Bukhari)

It’s noteworthy that the chain of narration includes Abu Hurairah ﷺ himself.

To the narration mentioned above al-Bukhari adds:

حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ الْمُنْذِرِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي فُدَيْكٍ بِهَذَا أَوْ قَالَ عَرَفَ بِيَدِهِ فِيهِ

“Ibrahim Bin Mundhir said that Ibn Abu Fudaik narrated the same but added: He moved his hands as if he was filling something in the cloth.”

Ibn Abu Fudaik is controversial; some scholars accepted narrations from him, others said he needs to be checked, while others didn’t accept his narrations. Ibn Sa’d wrote in *Tabaqat*, vol 5 كان كثير الحديث i.e., *he had a lot of narrations, but he can’t be used as proof.*

There are, however, two other narrations which indicate that this incident did take place.

Narration 1 which includes Hammad Bin Shu’aib: Adh-Dhahabi writes in *Siyar A’lam*:

حماد بن شعيب عن إسماعيل بن أمية عن محمد بن قيس بن مخزومة: أن رجلا جاء إلى زيد بن ثابت فسأله عن شيء فقال: عليك بأبي هريرة فإنه بينا أنا وهو وفلان في المسجد ندعو خرج علينا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فجلس وقال: عودوا إلى ما كنتم قال زيد: فدعوت أنا وصاحبي ورسول الله يؤمن ثم دعا أبو هريرة فقال: اللهم إني أسألك مثل ما سألك وأسألك

علما لا ينسى فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: آمين فقلنا: ونحن نسأل الله علما لا ينسى فقال: سبقكما بها الدوسي
أخرجه الحاكم في مستدركه لكن حماد ضعيف

“A man came to Zayd Bin Thabit and asked about something, and he said: ‘Go to Abu Hurairah, for I was with him and someone else in the mosque and the Messenger of Allah entered and sat with us. And he said: ‘Ask for what you usually ask for.’ Zayd said: ‘My companion and I asked, and the Messenger of Allah said ‘ameen.’ Then Abu Hurairah prayed and said: ‘O Allah, I ask of You a knowledge which won’t be forgotten.’ The Messenger of Allah said ‘ameen.’ Then we said: ‘And we ask for a knowledge which won’t be forgotten.’ He replied: ‘This dawsī beat you to it.’”

Al-Hakim narrated it in his *Mustadrak*, but Hammad is weak.”

Chain of narration: Hammad Bin Shu'aib – Isma'il Bin Umayyah – Muhammad Bin Qais Bin Makhramah.

Since Hammad is weak, the narration should be rejected based on this chain of narration.

Narration 2 about the incident:

أَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ، قَالَ : حَدَّثَنَا الْفَضْلُ بْنُ الْعَلَاءِ ، قَالَ : حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ أُمَيَّةَ ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ قَيْسٍ ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ ، أَنَّهُ أَخْبَرَهُ ، أَنَّ رَجُلًا جَاءَ زَيْدَ بْنَ ثَابِتٍ ، فَسَأَلَهُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ ، فَقَالَ لَهُ زَيْدٌ : عَلَيْكَ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ ، فَإِنِّي بَيْنَمَا أَنَا وَأَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ وَفُلَانٌ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ نَدْعُو اللَّهَ ، وَنَذْكُرُ رَبَّنَا ، خَرَجَ عَلَيْنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى جَلَسَ إِلَيْنَا ، فَسَكَتْنَا ، فَقَالَ : عُودُوا لِلَّذِي كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ ، قَالَ زَيْدٌ : فَدَعَوْتُ أَنَا وَصَاحِبِي قَتْلَ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ، وَجَعَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُؤْمِنُ عَلَيَّ دُعَائِنَا ، ثُمَّ دَعَا أَبُو هُرَيْرَةَ ، فَقَالَ : اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِثْلَ مَا سَأَلَكَ صَاحِبَايَ هَذَانِ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ عِلْمًا لَا يُنْسَى ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : آمِينَ ، فَقَالَ : يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، وَنَحْنُ نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ عِلْمًا لَا يُنْسَى ، فَقَالَ : سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا الْغُلَامُ الدَّوْسِيُّ

“A man came to Zaid Ibn Thabit and asked about something. Zaid said to the man: ‘Go to Abu Hurairah, because I sat with Abu Hurairah and a third person in the mosque the day, we were remembering Allah and calling unto Him. The Messenger of Allah came to us, and we became

silent, and he said: 'Call, as you are used to doing.' Zaid said: 'My companion and I asked for something before Abu Hurairah, and the Messenger of Allah said 'ameen.' Then Abu Hurairah said: 'O Allah, I ask You for the same as my companions asked for, and I ask You for a knowledge which isn't forgotten. The Messenger of Allah said 'ameen.' He said: 'O Messenger of Allah, we also ask for a knowledge which isn't forgotten.' To that, he replied: "This young dawsī beat you to it." (an-Nasa'i)

Chain of narration: Muhammad Bin Ibrahim – al-Fadl Bin al-'Ala – Isma'il Bin Umayyah – Muhammad Bin Qais – His father.

Al-Fadl Bin al-'Ala is controversial; some scholars accepted his narrations, others said he needs to be checked لا بأس به, while others, for instance, ad-Darqutni said about him كان كثير الوهم, i.e., *he imagined a lot of things* which Ibn Hajar writes in *Tabdheeb*, vol 8 and *Taqrib*.

If one would accept this narration and disregard the defects in the chain of narration, then the topic of the narration is that Abu Hurairah ﷺ forgets what he has heard, which is why he prays to receive some knowledge which won't be forgotten. This doesn't give rise to an infallible memory as some knowledge doesn't include all the received knowledge. I.e., if Abu Hurairah ﷺ remembered merely one narration from or about the Prophet ﷺ, then the prayer would've been answered.

Another issue is that the prayer doesn't involve him remembering who he heard the narration from. Nor does it entail that everything he narrates really is from or about the Prophet ﷺ which is the relevant part concerning our examination.

So, even if Abu Hurairah ﷺ allegedly remembered the content of narrations, he still was confused about who he had heard it from, which is a problem with regards to narrations with a singular chain of narration leading back to Abu Hurairah ﷺ only.

The myth about this meeting with Jinn was widespread at the time of al-Bukhari. So it's hard to say if the error was due to Abu Hurairah ﷺ being confused regarding narrators and by mistake narrating this

narration as something he heard from the Prophet ﷺ, or if it was attributed to him by mistake followed by al-Bukhari including it in his collection.

The fact of the matter is that Abu Hurairah ؓ wasn't present that night, as Abu Hurairah ؓ didn't come to the Prophet ﷺ until the battle of Khaybar around the 7. year *hijri*. And there aren't any authentic narrations from the ones who were with the Prophet ﷺ this particular night who should be the first to know about these amazing things; what the Jinn allegedly eat, etc. It would be absurd to claim that the Prophet ﷺ didn't tell the companions who were there that night anything, waited some years, and then only informed Abu Hurairah ؓ about it for the rest of his life.

Regarding the conflict between this narration and reality, it's an irrefutable fact that bones don't disappear into thin air – they would appear to do so if an invisible creature ate them. The myth about Jinn eating bones seems to be a creative fabrication in a time when people didn't know about bacteria, fungus, and decomposition which occurs in the case of organic substances.

Due to the abovementioned reasons, this narration should be rejected. And the conclusion is that the Prophet ﷺ didn't see the Jinn as rightfully narrated by Ibn 'Abbas ؓ.

The following narration also emphasizes that nobody can control Jinn or contact them since the Prophet ﷺ was merely wishing he could also overpower the Jinni physically, and not just mentally, and tie it to one of the pillars in the Mosque and put it on display. But then he recalled the prayer of Sulaiman ؑ entailing that nobody would ever receive a Kingdom like his:

إِنَّ عِفْرِيتًا مِنَ الْجِنِّ تَفَلَّتْ عَلَى الْبَارِحَةِ - أَوْ كَلِمَةً نَحْوَهَا - لَيَقْطَعُ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ، فَأَمْكَنَنِي اللَّهُ مِنْهُ، فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَرْبِطَهُ إِلَى سَارِيَةٍ مِنْ سَوَارِي الْمَسْجِدِ، حَتَّى تُصْبِحُوا وَتَنْظُرُوا إِلَيْهِ كُلُّكُمْ، فَذَكَرْتُ قَوْلَ أَخِي سُلَيْمَانَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِنْ بَعْدِي

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘An *Ifrit* from amongst the Jinn came to interrupt my prayer, but Allah enabled me to defeat him. I wished I could fasten him to one of the pillars of the

mosque so that all of you could see him in the morning, but I remembered the prayer of my brother Sulaiman: 'My Lord! Grant me a Kingdom the like of which shall not belong to anybody after me.'" (al-Bukhari)

We are informed that devils influence our lives by whispering to us, Allah ﷻ says:

﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ﴿١﴾ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ﴿٣﴾ مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ﴿٤﴾ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ﴿٥﴾ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ﴾

"Say: 'I seek refuge in the Cherisher of mankind, the King of mankind, the Lord of mankind, against the evil of the temptations of the devils, of Jinn and human beings, who induce temptation into the hearts of mankind.'" (114:1-6)

Besides this, the word devil (*shaytan*) is employed as a symbol of or a metaphor for something evil or bad rhetorically speaking. I.e., figuratively, bad or evil things are called devils (*shayateen*). Some Muslims don't know about this kind of symbolism and rhetorics why they mistakenly take some texts literally.

Some people might wonder why a whole chapter is dedicated to the Jinn in the Qur'an if the Jinn don't play a notable role in our lives.

In order to fully appreciate the rhetorical aspects, one needs to have the myths of the Arabs and their fear of the Jinn in mind; they feared the Jinn, some even worshipped the Jinn, and now they are told that when the Jinn heard the Qur'an being recited, they were fascinated by what they heard. It's like saying: "*These creatures which you fear and even worship, even they submitted themselves to Allah ﷻ when they heard the Qur'an being recited.*"

It's the same rhetorical impact force we can find in the description of the challenge of the Qur'an to mankind:

﴿ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾ ٢٣ ﴿ فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴾

“And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your witnesses besides Allah if you are truthful. But if you do (it) not and never shall you do (it), then be on your guard against the fire of which men and stones are the fuel prepared for the unbelievers.” (2:23-24)

It's a way of saying: “*These creatures which you fear and some of you even worship them, even if you could do the impossible and get help from them, then you wouldn't be able to produce anything like the Qur'an.*”

The Prophet ﷺ didn't undertake a lot of progressive steps to refute the many myths and the superstition about the Jinn which were widespread amongst the Arabs which is why some of the myths crept into the understanding of Islam of some Muslims. This can be explained by the basic Islamic ideas shape a critical mindset which, if understood correctly, deals with superstition fundamentally. I.e., the Islamic texts form an analytical mindset and a critical approach if they are read with a clear mind which isn't influenced by, for instance, superstition.

In what follows, we shall go through some of the many misunderstandings about the Jinn. Some examples to name a few are that Satan laughs when someone yawns, makes one yawn or jumps into one's mouth when one yawns.

Yawning is from Satan

Various narrations associate yawning with Satan, for instance:

التَّأَوُّبُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِذَا تَنَاءَبَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيَكْظُمْ مَا اسْتَطَاعَ

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘Yawning is from Satan. So, when one of you yawns, he should try to restrain it as much as possible.’” (Muslim)

But these narrations shouldn't be understood to mean that Satan is the one causing you to yawn. This becomes clear when including other narrations about the topic:

التَّأَوُّبُ فِي الصَّلَاةِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِذَا تَنَاءَبَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيَكْظِمْ مَا اسْتَطَاعَ

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet said: ‘Yawning whilst praying is from the Shaitan, so when one of you yawns then let him suppress (it) as much as possible.’” (at-Tirmidhi)

So, the narrations are about yawning during prayer. They are not to be understood as Satan causes us to yawn generally speaking, but it's an instruction to suppress yawning during the prayer so that we don't break our concentration (khushu') – or the concentration of others.

Satan is associated with yawning during the prayer because it's a bad thing to be distracted during the prayer. So, figuratively speaking, yawning during prayer is from Satan.

Satan enters one's mouth when one yawns

In line with the previous narrations, the following narrations also instruct us to cover our mouths when yawning. Otherwise, Satan enters it:

إِذَا تَنَاءَبَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيُمْسِكْ عَلَى فِيهِ فَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَدْخُلُ

“When one of you yawns, he should hold his hand over his mouth, for Satan enters.” (Abu Dawud)

Like the previously mentioned narrations, the intended meaning is that Satan distracts one during prayer. The meaning isn't that Satan physically and literally enters one's body through the mouth.

Satan laughs when one yawns

In line with the narrations mentioned above, narrations inform us that Satan laughs when one yawn (during prayer):

التَّأَوُّبُ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ، فَإِذَا تَنَاءَبَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلْيَرْدِّهِ مَا اسْتَطَاعَ، فَإِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ إِذَا قَالَ هَا ضَحِكَ الشَّيْطَانُ

“Abu Hurairah narrated, that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘Yawning is from Satan, and if anyone of you yawns, he should suppress his yawning as much as possible, for if anyone of you (during the act of yawning) should say: ‘Ha,’ Satan will laugh at him.’” (al-Bukhari)

Ibn Battal explained this narration in his *Sharh al-Bukhari*:

وقال ابن بطال في (شرح البخاري): ومعنى إضافة التأوُّب إلى الشيطان إضافة رضى وإرادة ، أي أن الشيطان يحب أن يرى تتأوَّب الإنسان ؛ لأنها حال المثلثة وتغيير لصورته ، فيضحك من جوفه ؛ لا أن الشيطان يفعل التأوُّب في الإنسان ؛ لأنه لا خالق للخير والشر غير الله ، وكذلك كل ما جاء من الأفعال المنسوبة إلى الشيطان فإنها على معنيين: إما إضافة رضى وإرادة ، أو إضافة بمعنى الوسوسة في الصدر والتزيين

“The meaning of associating yawning to Satan is him being pleased with it and that he wants it. I.e., that Satan loves to see man yawn because it’s a twisted state which makes him laugh at the mouth of man. It doesn’t mean that Satan causes man to yawn because there aren’t any creators of good and evil besides Allah. And the same applies to everything that is associated with Satan, it carries one of two meanings: Either by being attached to his pleasure or will or by whispering in the heart and beautification.”

In what follows, we shall take a look at other narrations which have been misunderstood giving rise to absurd and incorrect understandings due to some Muslims taking them literally.

Satan urinates in one’s ear

Some narrations inform us that Satan urinates in the ear of man if taken literally:

عن عبد الله رضي الله عنه، قال: ذكر عند النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم رجل نام ليلة حتى أصبح، قال: ذاك رجل بال الشيطان في أذنيه، أو قال: في أذنه

“Abdullah narrated: ‘It was mentioned in front of the Prophet ﷺ that a man slept all night until the next morning. The Prophet ﷺ said: ‘This is

a man in whose ears, Satan has urinated,' or he said 'in whose ear.'" (al-Bukhari)

عن عبد الله رضي الله عنه، قال: ذكر عند النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم رجل، فقيل: ما زال نائماً حتى أصبح، ما قام إلى الصلاة، فقال: بال الشيطان في أذنه

"Abdullah narrated that a person was mentioned before the Prophet and he was told that the person had kept on sleeping till morning and had not got up for the prayer. The Prophet said, 'Satan urinated in his ears.'" (al-Bukhari)

For one to understand narrations of this kind correctly, knowledge of Arabic rhetorics, the structure of metaphors, and the connotations of the reference of urine and ears in rhetorics are required.

Ears symbolize the ability to reason. And the connection between sleeping heavily and being disconnected to the world is evident like we find in the Koran when it was said about *ashab al-ka'f* (The People of the Cave):

﴿ فَضْرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا ﴾

"We hit their ears in the cave for a number of years" (18:11)

Ar-Rummani, a central reference in the study of Arabic rhetorics, explained the metaphor employed in the verse in his book, *an-Nukat fi I'jaz al-Qur'an*, under the chapter on metaphors (al-isti'arah) in the Qur'an:

حقيقته منعناهم الإحساس بأذانهم من غير صمم، والاستعارة أبلغ لأنه كالضرب على الكتاب فلا يقرأ، كذلك المنع من الإحساس فلا يحس، وإنما دل على عدم الإحساس بالضرب على الآذان دون الضرب على الأبصار، لأنه أدل على المراد من حيث كان قد يضرب على الأبصار من غير عمى فلا يبطل الإدراك رأساً، وذلك بتغميض الأجفان، وليس كذلك منع الإسماع من غير صمم في الآذان لأنه إذا ضرب عليها من غير صمم دل على عدم الإحساس من كل جراحة يصح بها الإدراك، ولأن الأذن لما كانت طريقاً إلى الانتباه ثم ضربوا عليها لم يكن سبيل إليه
 "Its reality is: *We prevented them from the sensation of hearing with their ears*, but without making them deaf. The metaphor is more eloquent because it is like smiting a book [hitting an open book so that it closes] so that it may not be read. Being prevented from sensation, so that there is no

sensation, is something similar. He specified the lack of sensation by 'smiting' their ears and not their eyes because this is more indicative of the intention, for 'smiting' the eyes without blindness does not immediately suppress perception, such as by closing the eyelids. But preventing hearing without deafness is not like this, because if they are 'smitten' without deafness, then they can still have sensation by all other parts of the body, with which perception is possible, and [also] because, if smitten, the ears being the medium of attention, there would be no way to that." – End of quote.

Likewise, the reference to urine has a symbolic meaning that requires knowledge of Arabic rhetorics to be comprehended. In cases like this, urine denotes the worst kind of being overpowered by sleep which pleases Satan.

Ibn Hajar writes in *Fath ul-Bari* that it is said:

وقيل: هو مثل مضروب للغافل عن القيام بثقل النوم كمن وقع البول في أذنه فثقل أذنه وأفسد حسه والعرب تكني عن الفساد بالبول

"It's symbolism employed about someone who is reckless regarding the prayers due to deep sleep, like if the person had his ear filled with urine to the extent, it became heavy and the senses corrupt. The Arabs use urination as metonymy (kinayah) for corruption (fasad)."

And an-Nawawi explains in his *sharh* to *Sahih Muslim* that it is said:

وقيل: معناه استخف به واحتقره واستعلي عليه يقال لمن استخف بإنسان وخدعه بال في أذنه وأصل ذلك في دابة تفعل ذلك بالأسد إذلالاً له وقال الحرابي معناه ظهر عليه وسخر منه

"It means to demean, humiliate, and to overpower someone. If someone demeans and deceives somebody else, it is said he urinated in the ear of the latter. The expression is derived from an animal urinated in the ear of a lion to humiliate it. Al-Harbi said: 'It means, he defeated and mocked him.'"

It can also be used to denote corruption and depravity. In the work titled *Lisan al-Arab*, it's mentioned that ar-Rajiz said:

بال سهيل في الفضيخ ففسد

“Canopus urinated in the drink corrupting it.”

Which means that when the star Canopus rises (early in August in Central-Arabia when they stop producing this drink), the season for unripe dates has ended. Despite the formulation being constructed in a causative manner, the point is that the two phenomena coincide; the star rises, and the drink isn't produced anymore. It doesn't mean that the star actually corrupted the drink or that it actually urinated.

Ibn Battal points to a verse by al-Farazdaq, in which there is a connection between urine and corruption:

وان الذى يسعى ليفسد زوجتى كساع إلى أسد الشرى يستيلها

“whosoever seeks to corrupt my wife is like the one who goes to the lions of ash-Shara to receive their urine (in his hand).”

In this verse, the connection between urine and corruption is evident. So, it's a way to describe the evil there is in neglecting one's obligations; something which pleases Satan.

At-Tahawi provided a much longer explanation of the narration in his work, *Mushkil al-Athar*:

كان النوم المذكور في الحديث الذي بدأنا بذكره في هذا الباب نوما كان من نائمه تضييعه فرض الله عز وجل في العشاء ثم خلافة لما كرهه له نبيه صلى الله عليه وسلم من النوم قبلها الذي كان سببا لتضييعها ولترك أداء فرضها في الوقت الذي أوجب الله عز وجل عليه أداءه فيه فكان في ذلك مخالفا لربه عز وجل مطيعا للشيطان فيما يريده منه فضرب على أذنيه بذلك النوم وهو ما ألقى فيهما من ثقل النوم والعرب تسمي مثل ذلك ضربا على الأذن ومنه قول الله عز وجل في أهل الكهف (فضربنا على آذانهم في الكهف سنين عددا (الكهف: 11) وأضيف ذلك الفعل به إلى الشيطان لأنه مما يرضاه الشيطان منه وذكر فيه بول الشيطان في أذنه أي فعل به أقبح ما يفعل بالنوام وليس ذلك على حقيقة البول منه في أذنه ولكن على المثل والاستعارة

“The sleep that is mentioned in the narration which we began the chapter with is a sleep by which someone neglects an obligation towards Allah at night. Furthermore, it is hated by His Messenger to sleep before performing the night prayer causing one to miss the prayer and thus not perform it in the appointed time interval by Allah. This person opposes his Lord while obeying Satan in what Satan wants from him, so Satan strikes his ears, and this is what he puts in them of deep sleep. The Arabs call such things to strike the ears, and it is also used by Allah ﷻ regarding the People of the Cave *We hit their ears in the cave for a number of years*. This action has been associated with Satan since he is pleased with it. And the reference to Satan urinating means that the action is fouler than sleeping. This shouldn't be understood literally to mean that he actually urinates in someone's ears, but instead this is symbolism and a metaphor.”

It should be obvious how glaringly one can misunderstand such narrations if one doesn't have knowledge of Arabic rhetorics and accordingly understand such narrations literally.

Satan urinates in one's mouth

There are some rumors that Satan urinates in one's mouth if one doesn't cover one's mouth when yawning. There aren't any texts regarding this, but even if there were, then almost the same would apply to them like the other narrations mentioned above, for instance, that Satan urinates in one's ear. The rumors might be a result of mixing the narrations regarding not covering one's mouth while yawning with Satan urinating in one's ear.

Satan sleeps in one's nose

إِذَا اسْتَيْقَظَ أَرَاهُ أَحَدَكُمْ مِنْ مَنَامِهِ فَتَوَضَّأَ فَلْيَسْتَنْثِرْ ثَلَاثًا فَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَبِيتُ عَلَى خَيْشُومِهِ

“Abu Huraira narrated that The Prophet said: ‘If anyone of you rouses from sleep and performs the ablution, he should wash his nose by putting water in it and then blowing it out thrice because Satan has stayed in the upper part of his nose all the night.’ (al-Bukhari)

This narration is a perfect example of a simple metaphor that nobody in his or her right mind should misunderstand. When sleeping at night then one often feels that filth has gathered in the nose which one should clean. Therefore, it shouldn't come as a surprise for anyone that Satan, in this case, is a metaphor for filth gathering in the nose while sleeping.

Satan flows in one's body

The Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَجْرِي مِنَ الْإِنْسَانِ مَجْرَى الدَّمِّ

“Verily, Satan flows in man as his blood flows.” (Muslim)

This narration has been employed as an argument for Jinn having the ability to possess the human body. It doesn't, however, serve as an argument since flowing around in someone's body, if we don't think about just how this should be possible, doesn't give one the ability to control that person.

The meaning of the narration becomes clear when we read the entire narration:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ مَعَ إِخْدَى نِسَائِهِ فَمَرَّ بِهِ رَجُلٌ فَدَعَاهُ فَجَاءَ فَقَالَ يَا فُلَانُ هَذِهِ زَوْجَتِي فَلَانَةُ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَنْ كُنْتُ أَظُنُّ بِهِ فَلَمْ أَكُنْ أَظُنُّ بِكَ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَجْرِي مِنَ الْإِنْسَانِ مَجْرَى الدَّمِّ

“Anas reported that when the Messenger of Allah was in the company of one of his wives, a person happened to pass by them. He called him, and when he came, he said to him: ‘O so and so, this is my wife.’ Thereupon he said: ‘O Messenger of Allah if I were to doubt at all, I would have entertained no doubt about you at least.’ Thereupon the Messenger of Allah: ‘Verily, Satan flows in man as his blood flows.’” (Muslim)

From the context it's evident that this is a metaphor which points towards the fact that we are prone to suspect each other which becomes even more apparent in another variant of the narration:

وعن أم المؤمنين صفية بنت حيي رضي الله عنها قالت: كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم معتكفاً، فأتته أزوره ليلاً، فحدثته ثم قمت لأنقلب، فقام معي ليقبني، فمر رجلان من الأنصار رضي الله عنهما، فلما رأيا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أسرعاً، فقال صلى الله عليه وسلم: علي رسلكما إنها صفية بنت حيي فقالا: سبحان الله يا رسول الله قال: إن الشيطان يجري من ابن آدم مجرى الدم، وإني خشيت أن يقذف في قلوبكما شراً أو قال: شيئاً

“Safiyyah bint Huyai said: ‘I came to visit the Prophet while he was in the state of I’tikaf. After having talked to him, I got up to return. The Prophet also got up with me and accompanied me a part of the way. At that moment two Ansari men passed by. When they saw him, they quickened their pace. The Prophet said to them, ‘Do not hurry. She is Safiyyah, daughter of Huyai, my wife.’ They said: ‘Subhan Allah! O Messenger of Allah! (You are far away from any suspicion).’ The Messenger of Allah said, ‘Verily, Satan flows in man as his blood flows. I apprehended lest Satan should drop some evil thoughts in your minds.’ Or he said: ‘something.’” (al-Bukhari & Muslim)

Black dogs are devils

There are numerous variants of a narration from the Profeten ﷺ which have the following statement in common:

الكلب الأسود شيطان

“Black dogs are devils.” (Muslim, an-Nasa’i, Ibn Majah & Abu Dawud)

Keeping in the mind what was explained earlier that there is a difference between the terms devil (shaytan) and Jinn and also that the term satan can be used metaphorically, it should be evident that the meaning is devils as a metaphor and not Jinn. A particular breed of black dogs was termed a satan due to this breed being very aggressive and biting.

It’s apparent due to the following narration:

خَمْسٌ يَقْتُلُهُنَّ الْمُحَرِّمُ الْحَيَّةُ وَالْفَأَزَةُ وَالْجِدَادَةُ وَالْغُرَابُ الْأَبْقَعُ وَالْكَلْبُ الْعَقُورُ

“Aishah narrated that the Prophet said: ‘5 are permitted for a *muhrim* to kill: Snakes, mice, kites, speckled crows, and vicious dogs (dogs who bite).’” (an-Nasa’i)

Dogs and donkeys see the Jinn

In some Muslim circles, there is a misunderstanding that particular animals can see the Jinn. The misconception is due to a wrong understanding of the following narration:

إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ نُبَاحَ الْكِلَابِ وَنَهْيَ الْخُمُرِ بِاللَّيْلِ فَتَعَوَّذُوا بِاللَّهِ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَ مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ

“Jabir ibn Abdullah narrated that the Prophet said: ‘When you hear the barking of dogs and the braying of asses at night, seek refuge in Allah, for they see what you do not see.’” (Abu Dawud)

One of the reasons for the misunderstanding is due to a narration found in the collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim:

إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ صِيَاحَ الدِّيَكَةِ فَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ، فَإِنَّهَا رَأَتْ مَلَكًا، وَإِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ نَهْيَ الْجَمَارِ فَتَعَوَّذُوا بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ، فَإِنَّهُ رَأَى شَيْطَانًا

“Abu Huraira narrated that the Prophet said: ‘When you hear the crowing of cocks, ask for Allah’s Blessings, for they have seen an angel. And when you hear the braying of donkeys, seek Refuge with Allah from Satan, for they have seen a devil (shaytan).’” (al-Bukhari; different wordings in Muslim, at-Tirmidhi & Abu Dawud)

The problem with this narration is that it conflicts with verses of the Qur’an and authentic narrations, as numerous verses and narrations conclusively establish that we are constantly surrounded by angels:

﴿ إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيَانِ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشَّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ مَّا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ﴾

“When the two receivers receive, sitting on the right and on the left; he utters not a word, but there is by him a watcher at hand.” (50:17-18)

﴿ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ ﴿١١﴾ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴾

“There are angelic guards watching over you, and these honorable scribes know whatever you do.” (82:10-12)

﴿لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّن يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ﴾

“For his sake, there are angels following one another, before him and behind him, who guard him by Allah’s commandment.” (13:11)

يَتَعَاقَبُونَ فِيكُمْ مَلَائِكَةٌ بِاللَّيْلِ وَمَلَائِكَةٌ بِالنَّهَارِ، وَيَجْتَمِعُونَ فِي صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَصَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ، ثُمَّ يَرْجِعُ الَّذِينَ بَاتُوا فِيكُمْ، فَيسألُهُمْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ كَيْفَ تَرَكْتُمْ عِبَادِي يَقُولُونَ تَرَكْنَاهُمْ وَهُمْ يَصَلُّونَ، وَأَتَيْنَاهُمْ وَهُمْ يَصَلُّونَ

“Abu Huraira narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘Angels come to you in succession by night and day, and all of them get together at the time of the Fajr and ‘Asr prayers. Those who have passed the night with you (or stayed with you) ascend (to the Heaven), and Allah asks them, though He knows everything about you, well: ‘In what state did you leave my slaves?’ The angels reply: ‘When we left them, they were praying, and when we reached them, they were praying.’” (al-Bukhari)

If roosters should crow every time, they saw an angel, they should crow every time, they saw a human being, since each and every one of us is constantly accompanied and surrounded by angels according to numerous verses of the Qur’an and narrations from the Prophet ﷺ. But roosters don’t crow when they see human beings, which rules out that they see the angels surrounding us. Therefore, the narrations which claim that roosters crow due to seeing angels should be rejected. It’s not defensible to claim that the narrations mean to speak of certain kinds of angels since the texts do not restrict the crowing to certain kinds of angels; that would entail specifying something the texts didn’t inform us about.

Tsuyoshi Shimmura and Takashi Yoshimura undertook a study in 2013 of what causes roosters to crow; if it’s external stimuli or an internal clock (a circadian clock). Their study was published with the title *Circadian clock determines the timing of rooster crowing*. They concluded, as the title implies, that roosters crowing is governed by an internal clock, even when there are external stimuli such as light at dawn or other roosters crowing. The conclusion was reached based on experiments with roosters in which they managed to manipulate and move the internal clock of the roosters to the extent that the roosters crowed approximately 2 hours before dawn.

It should be evident that roosters crowing isn't due to them seeing angels since it conflicts with more authentic, Islamic texts and reality.

As for the narrations about dogs barking and donkeys braying when they see a devil; if the term *satan* should be understood as a reference to the Jinn, then they should bark and bray every time they are around human beings. This is due to numerous Islamic texts informing us that each and every one of us has been appointed a Jinni which is called a *qareen*:

مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا وَقَدْ وَكَّلَ بِهِ قَرِينُهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ وَإِنِّي إِلَّا أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَانَنِي عَلَيْهِ فَأَسْلَمَ فَلَا يَأْمُرُنِي إِلَّا بِخَيْرٍ

“Abdullah Ibn Mas’ud ؓ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘There is none amongst you with whom is not an *attache* from amongst the Jinn. They (the Companions) said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, with you too?’ Thereupon he said: ‘Yes, but Allah helps me against him and so I am safe from his hand, and he does not command me but for good.’” (Muslim)

Allah ﷻ informs us what this *qareen* shall say on the Day of Judgement:

﴿ قَالَ قَرِينُهُ رَبَّنَا مَا أَطَعْتُهُ وَلَكِنْ كَانَ فِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴾

“His *qareen* will say: Our Lord, I didn't mislead him, but he himself went astray.” (50:27)

If it was the case that dogs bark and donkeys bray when they see the Jinn, and every human being constantly is surrounded by a Jinni, then they should bark and bray every time they saw a human being. This very clearly shows that the word *devil* and *they see what you do not* in the narration isn't a reference to the Jinn. Other narrations clarify what these narrations mean:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: أَقْلُوا الْخُرُوجَ بَعْدَ هُدُوءٍ، فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ دَوَابَّ يَبْتَئُهُنَّ، فَمَنْ سَمِعَ نُبَاحَ الْكَلْبِ، أَوْ نُهَاقَ حِمَارٍ، فَلْيَسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَ مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ

“Jabir Ibn 'Abdullah reported that the Prophet said ‘Do not go out often after the night is still. Allah has animals which he sends out.

Anyone who hears the barking of a dog or the braying of a donkey should seek refuge with Allah from the Accursed Shaytan. They see what you do not see.” (al-Bukhari Adab al-Mufrad)

أَقْلُوا الْخُرُوجَ بَعْدَ هَذَا الرَّجُلِ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى دَوَابَّ يَبْتَهِنُ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالَ ابْنُ مَرْوَانَ فِي تِلْكَ السَّاعَةِ وَقَالَ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خَلْقًا ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ نُبَّاحَ الْكَلْبِ وَالْحَمِيرَ نَحْوَهُ وَزَادَ فِي حَدِيثِهِ قَالَ ابْنُ الْهَادِ وَحَدَّثَنِي شُرْحِبِيلُ الْحَاجِبُ عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِثْلَهُ
 “Ali ibn Umar Ibn Husayn Ibn Ali narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘Do not go out much when there are few people about, for Allah, the Exalted, scatters abroad of His beasts (dawaab) in that hour.’ Ibn Marwan’s version has: ‘For Allah has creatures.’ He then mentioned the barking of dogs and braying of asses in a similar manner. He added in his version: Ibn al-Had said: ‘Shurahbil ibn al-Hajib told me on the authority of Jabir ibn Abdullah from the Messenger of Allah similar to it.’” (Abu Dawud)

In Sahih al-Bukhari under the chapter titled *Bab Khams min ad-Dawaab Fawasiq Yuqtalna fil-Haram* (Chapter on 5 kinds of animals are harmful and allowed to kill in the Sacred Area), we find the following narration:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رَفَعَهُ قَالَ خَمَرُوا الْآيَةَ، وَأَوَكُوا الْأَسْقِيَةَ، وَأَجِفُوا الْأَبْوَابَ، وَاكْفُوا صِبْيَانَكُمْ عِنْدَ الْعِشَاءِ، فَإِنَّ لِلْجِنِّ انْتِشَارًا وَخَطْفَةً، وَأَطْفُوا الْمَصَابِيحَ عِنْدَ الرُّقَادِ، فَإِنَّ الْفَوَاسِقَ رُبَّمَا اجْتَرَّتِ الْفَتِيلَةَ فَأَحْرَقَتْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ قَالَ ابْنُ جُرَيْجٍ وَحَبِيبٌ عَنْ عَطَاءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلشَّيَاطِينِ
 “Jabir Bin ’Abdullah narrated: ‘The Prophet said: ‘Cover your utensils, tie your water skins, close your doors, and keep your children close to you at night, as the Jinn spread out at such time and snatch things away. When you go to bed, put out your lights, for the mischief-doer (i.e., the rat) may drag away the wick of the candle and burn the dwellers of the house.’ Ata said: ‘devils.’ (instead of the Jinn).” (al-Bukhari)

The word دَوَابَّ (dawaab) in the narration and in the title of the chapter is used about animals, not the Jinn.

The narrations about dogs and donkeys see what we don’t, at night, means that they see animals that we due to the dark fail to see; this involves snakes, scorpions, and other vermins – which is why they are termed devils.

Snakes can be Jinn

Particular narrations are misunderstood by some Muslims why they mistakenly believe that some snakes are Jinn.

They associate these narrations with the verses of the Qur'an which inform us that some Jinn are Muslims while others are non-Muslims. And they especially associate these narrations to the incident in Mecca where Allah ﷻ revealed to the Prophet ﷺ that some of the Jinn listened to the recitation of the Qur'an and declared faith in it:

﴿ قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا، يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ ﴾

“Say: ‘It has been revealed to me that a party of Jinn has listened (to the recitation) of the Quran and has told (their people): ‘We heard an amazing reading which guides people to the right path, and we believe in it.’” (72:1-2)

They understand some narrations in the following way:

أبي السائب عن أبي سعيد الخدري قال سمعته قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن بالمدينة نفرا من الجن قد أسلموا فمن رأى شيئا من هذه العوامر فليؤذنه ثلاثا فإن بدا له بعد فليقتله فإنه شيطان

“Abu Sa’ib narrated: I heard Abu Sa’id al-Khudri saying: ‘The Messenger of Allah said: ‘In Medinah, a group of Jinn already submitted to Islam, so whosoever sees anything from these snakes, then let him warn it three times, and should it attack, then kill it because it is a devil (shaytan).’” (Muslim)

This creates an illusion and gives rise to an erroneous belief in some Muslims that the reason for not killing snakes found in the home is that one might risk killing a snake that in reality is a Muslim Jinni. The following narration enhances that erroneous belief:

حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ هَاشِمٍ، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي لَيْلَى، عَنْ ثَابِتِ بْنِ النَّبَّاسِيِّ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي لَيْلَى، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سُئِلَ عَنْ حَيَاتِ الْبُيُوتِ

فَقَالَ إِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ شَيْئًا فِي مَسَاكِينِكُمْ فَقُولُوا أَنْشُدُكُمُ الْعَهْدَ الَّذِي أَخَذَ عَلَيْكُمُ نُوحٌ أَنْشُدُكُمُ الْعَهْدَ الَّذِي أَخَذَ عَلَيْكُمُ سُلَيْمَانُ أَنْ لَا تُؤْذُونَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ

“AbdurRahman Ibn Abu Layla narrated that the Messenger of Allah was asked about the house-snakes. He said: ‘When you see one of them in your dwelling, say: ‘I adjure you by the covenant which Noah made with you, and I adjure you by the covenant which Solomon made with you not to harm us.’ Then if they come back, kill them.” (Abu Dawud)

Chain of narration: Sa’id Bin Sulaiman – ‘Ali Bin Hashim – Ibn Abi Laila – Thabit al-Bunani – Abdur Rahman Bin Abi Laila – his father.

Afterward, they understand the rest of the narrations in this topic from this perspective and confirm one false, imaginary illusion after the other.

The latter narration is weak. First of all, it’s doubtful due to ‘Ali Bin Hashim who was declared weak by some scholars, while other scholars accepted his narrations according to *Tabdheeb*, vol 7 by Ibn Hajar.

Secondly, it includes Ibn Abi Laila who is weak due to a very poor memory according to *Syar A’lam*, vol 6 by adh-Dhahabi and *Tabdheeb*, vol 9 by Ibn Hajar.

This is more than sufficient reason for rejecting the narration.

The three clearest narrations in this theme are the following, of which the first one is a variant of the beforementioned narration informing us of the entire course of action:

حَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَبِي يَحْيَى، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي أَنَّهُ، انْطَلَقَ هُوَ وَصَاحِبٌ لَهُ إِلَى أَبِي سَعِيدٍ يَمُودَانِهِ فَخَرَجْنَا مِنْ عِنْدِهِ فَلَقِينَا صَاحِبًا لَنَا وَهُوَ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَدْخُلَ عَلَيْهِ فَأَقْبَلْنَا نَحْنُ فَجَلَسْنَا فِي الْمَسْجِدِ فَجَاءَ فَأَخْبَرَنَا أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أَبَا سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيَّ يَقُولُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ الْهَوَامَّ مِنَ الْجِنَّ فَمَنْ رَأَى فِي بَيْتِهِ شَيْئًا فَلْيُخْرِجْ عَلَيْهِ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ فَإِنْ عَادَ فَلْيَقْتُلْهُ فَإِنَّهُ شَيْطَانٌ

“Abu Sa’id al-Khudri narrated that Muhammad ibn Abu Yahya said that his father told him that he and his companion went to Abu Sa’id al-Khudri to pay him a visit while he was sick. He said: “Then we came

out from him and met a companion of ours who wanted to go to him. We went ahead and sat in the mosque. He then came back and told us that he heard Abu Sa'id al-Khudri say: "The Messenger of Allah said: 'Vermins are hidden; so, when anyone sees one of them in his house, he should give it a warning three times. If it returns (after that), he should kill it, for it is a devil (shaytan).'" (Abu Dawud)

The word **الهوام** (al-hawaam) is plural of **الهامة** (al-haamah) and encompasses vermins.

Al-Khattabi mentions in the book *Bayan I'jaz al-Qur'an* that Abu al-Makarim said:

مررت بمنهال وعلى شفيره صنيور بيده شوشب فقلت لأمه: أدركي القامة لا تأكله الهامة
 "I passed a sandhill, and by its end, there was a small boy with a *shawshab* in his hand, so I said to the boy's mother: 'Be careful regarding *al-qamah* so that he isn't eaten by the vermin (*al-hamah*).'"

Afterward, al-Khattabi mentions the following:

قال أبو العباس الشوشب العقرب والقامة الصبي الصغير
 "Abu al-'Abbas said: 'A *shawshab* is a scorpion, and a *qamah* is a little boy.'"

The verb **أسلم** *aslamu* can also carry the meaning *to bite* which is like **لدغ** *ladigh*, i.e., snakebite, while *al-Jinn* can mean *something hidden*, so the narration means *There is something hidden in Madinah that bites, so if you see it, then warn it 3 times, and should it return then kill it.*

We find a description of the word **أسلم** *aslama* in *al-Qamus al-Muhit* by al-Fayruzabadi:

السلم : ... أسلم وسلام ، ولدغ الحية
 "as-silm: *aslama* and *salaam*, and snakebite."

And as mentioned in *Sibah al-Lughah* by al-Jawhari:

السلام والسليم: اللدغ
 “As-salam and as-salim: Bite.”

This results in a more straightforward meaning of the narration:

عَنْ أَبِي السَّائِبِ، قَالَ أَتَيْتُ أَبَا سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِيَّ فَبَيْنَا أَنَا جَالِسٌ، عِنْدَهُ سَمِعْتُ تَحْتَ، سَرِيرِهِ تَحْرِيكَ شَيْءٍ فَنَظَرْتُ فَإِذَا حَيَّةٌ فَقُمْتُ فَقَالَ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ مَا لَكَ فَقُلْتُ حَيَّةٌ هَا هُنَا قَالَ فَتَرِيدُ مَاذَا قُلْتُ أَقْتُلُهَا فَأَشَارَ إِلَيَّ بَيْتٍ فِي دَارِهِ تَلَقَاءَ بَيْتِهِ فَقَالَ إِنَّ ابْنَ عَمِّ لِي كَانَ فِي هَذَا الْبَيْتِ فَلَمَّا كَانَ يَوْمُ الْأَحْزَابِ اسْتَأْذَنَ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ وَكَانَ حَدِيثَ عَهْدٍ بِعُورٍ فَأَذِنَ لَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَذْهَبَ بِسِلَاحِهِ فَأَتَى دَارَهُ فَوَجَدَ امْرَأَتَهُ قَائِمَةً عَلَى بَابِ الْبَيْتِ فَأَشَارَ إِلَيْهَا بِالرُّمْحِ فَقَالَتْ لَا تَعْجَلْ حَتَّى تَنْظُرَ مَا أَخْرَجَنِي فَدَخَلَ الْبَيْتَ فَإِذَا حَيَّةٌ مُنْكَرَةٌ فَطَعَنَهَا بِالرُّمْحِ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ بِهَا فِي الرُّمْحِ تَرْتِكِضُ قَالَ فَلَا أَدْرِي أَيُّهُمَا كَانَ أَسْرَعَ مَوْتًا الرَّجُلُ أَوِ الْحَيَّةُ فَأَتَى قَوْمَهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالُوا ادْعُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يَرُدَّ صَاحِبَنَا فَقَالَ اسْتَغْفِرُوا لِصَاحِبِكُمْ ثُمَّ قَالَ إِنَّ نَفَرًا مِنَ الْجِنِّ أَسْلَمُوا بِالْمَدِينَةِ فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ أَحَدًا مِنْهُمْ فَحَذِّرُوهُ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ ثُمَّ إِنْ بَدَأَ لَكُمْ بَعْدَ أَنْ تَقْتُلُوهُ فَاقْتُلُوهُ بَعْدَ الثَّلَاثِ

“Abu al-Sa’ib said: ‘I went to visit Abu Sa’id al-Khudri, and while I was sitting, I heard a movement under his couch. When I looked and found a snake there, I got up. Abu Sa’id said: ‘What is with you?’ I said: ‘There is a snake here.’ He said: ‘What are you going to do?’ I said: ‘I shall kill it.’ He then pointed to a room in his house in front of his room and said: ‘My cousin was in this room. He asked permission to go to his wife on the occasion of the battle of the Troops, as he was recently married. The Messenger of Allah gave him permission and ordered him to take his weapon with him. He came to his house and found his wife standing at the door of the house. When he pointed to her with the lance, she said: ‘Do not make haste till you see what has brought me out.’ He entered the house and found an ugly snake there. He pierced in the lance while it was quivering. He said: ‘I do not know which of them died first, the man or the snake.’ His people then came to the Messenger of Allah and said: ‘Supplicate Allah to restore our companion to life for us.’ He said: ‘Ask forgiveness for your Companion.’ Then he said: In Medina, a concealed group bites, so when you see one of them, pronounce a warning to it three times, and if it appears to you after that, kill it after three days.” (Abu Dawud)

The beforementioned narration was also narrated by Ibn 'Ajilan through a different chain of narration in a shorter version:

فَلْيُؤْذَنُ ثَلَاثًا فَإِنْ بَدَأَ لَهُ بَعْدُ فَلْيَقْتُلْهُ فَإِنَّهُ شَيْطَانٌ

“Warn it three times, if it shows itself after that, then kill it, as it is a devil (shaytan).” (Abu Dawud)

In this version, one should warn the vermin three times. If it's still there, then one should kill it since it's a devil (shaytan).

عَنِ الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، أَنَّهُ قَالَ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَكْنِسَ زَمْزَمَ وَإِنَّ فِيهَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْجِنَّاتِ - يَعْنِي الْحَيَّاتِ الصَّغَارَ - فَأَمَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِقَتْلِهِنَّ

“Al-Abbas Ibn AbdulMuttalib narrated that al-Abbas said to the Messenger of Allah: ‘We would like to clean the Zamzam, and therein there are Jinan, i.e., snakes, so the Messenger of Allah ordered them to be killed.’” (Muslim)

These three narrations form the right interpretative frame for interpreting the rest of the narrations on this topic.

There is a narration which has been classified as weak by some scholars which might have contributed to the misunderstanding:

أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ أُنْبِئَنَا مُعَاذُ بْنُ هِشَامٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سَرْجِسٍ، أَنَّ نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَا يُبُولَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ فِي جُحْرٍ قَالُوا لِقَتَادَةَ وَمَا يُكْرَهُ مِنَ الْبُؤْلِ فِي الْجُحْرِ قَالَ يُقَالُ إِنَّهَا مَسَاكِينُ الْجِنِّ

“Abdullah Bin Sarjis narrated that the Prophet said: ‘None of you should urinate into a burrow in the ground.’” They asked Qatadah: ‘Why is it disliked to urinate into a burrow in the ground?’ He said: ‘It is said that these are dwelling-places of the Jinn.’” (an-Nasa’i)

Chain of narration: ‘Ubaidullah Bin Sa’id – Mu’adh Bin Hisham – Hans far – Qatadah – ‘Abdullah Bin Sarjis

The narration has a singular chain of narration. Mu’adh Bin Hisham is controversial, particularly with regards to narrations from his father which is described in *Siyar A’lam*, vol 9 by adh-Dhahabi; *Lisan al-Mizan*,

vol 7 by Ibn Hajar, and *Tabdheeb*, vol 10. Therefore, the narration should be rejected.

If one should employ it disregarding its weakness, then it's entirely in line with using the word Jinn about hidden vermins: Don't urinate into little tunnels, snake holes, lizard holes, etc.

As for the chapter al-Jinn, it was revealed in Mecca before the migration to Madinah, while the incident with the man who was bitten and died happened in Madinah, as the battle of Ahzab occurred during the Madinan period. The Zamzam well is located in Mecca which the Muslims came to control due to the conquest of Mecca after returning from Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ wasn't asked about what to do about the snakes at Zamzam until after the conquest, as he wasn't in any position to give orders in Mecca until after the conquest of Mecca.

This means; first the Muslims were informed that the Jinn listened to the Qur'an, and some of them became Muslims in the Meccan period in an area not far from Mecca. After this, the Muslims emigrated to Madinah where the Prophet ﷺ instructed the Muslims to warn the snakes and not just kill them. And when the Muslims returned to Mecca, he ﷺ allowed the Muslims to kill snakes at the Zamzam well.

This completely rules out that the reason for not killing the house snakes was due to the possibility of some of them being Muslim Jinn. This is the case since we know with certainty that some of the Jinn had become Muslims in the Meccan period. Why should the Muslims risk killing snakes who were Jinn in Mecca but be careful about it in Madinah?

The reason that the Prophet ﷺ instructed the Muslims not to kill snakes they found in their homes is utterly unrelated to the Jinn. The reason is straightforward. First of all, it's completely unnecessary to kill harmless snakes, *al-Jinan*, and secondly, it's dangerous to try to kill poisonous snakes which might leave the house on their own since they usually end up in the house by mistake. This is why the Muslims were instructed to wait and see if it was a harmless or a poisonous snake, and whether or not it would leave the house on its own:

عَنْ نَافِعٍ، أَنَّ ابْنَ عُمَرَ كَانَ يَقْتُلُ الْحَيَّاتِ كُلَّهَا حَتَّى حَدَّثَهُ أَبُو لُبَابَةَ الْبَدْرِيُّ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ نَهَى عَنْ قَتْلِ حَيَّاتِ الْبُيُوتِ، فَأَمْسَكَ عَنْهَا

“Nafi’ narrated that Ibn ‘Umar used to kill snakes, but when Abu Lubaba informed him that the Prophet had forbidden the killing of snakes living in houses, he gave up killing them.” (al-Bukhari)

The following is a summary of how to handle the case when one finds a snake in the home as described on WikiHow and by various exterminators including Rentokil who have a branch in Saudi Arabia:

The venomous snakes in Saudi Arabia mainly belong to the Viper family, and snake bites are scarce in Saudi Arabia. In the last 20 years, less than 5 cases of snake bites have been reported.

Don’t attack the snake with a broom or a stick. Snakes don’t attack unless they feel threatened. If the snake is rolled up with an open mouth, then it sees you as a threat. Step away from it slowly. Bear in mind, that snakes are a positive factor in the eco-system since it keeps down the population of rodents and insect. It’s not a happy occasion to find a snake in your home, but you shouldn’t kill it.

Determine whether or not the snake is venomous. Even if your first thought is to scream and run away, you should have a thorough look at it and determine how significant the risk is. Snakes don’t attack people unless they don’t have any other options, so even though, intuitively, one might feel it’s necessary to drive the snake out one’s home, one should remain calm and examine what kind of snake it is, and then call an exterminator. One should, for instance, determine whether or not the body of the snake is thick, whether or not the fangs are big, if the pupils are vertical lines, and if the snake makes a rattling sound.

Get children and pets to safety. Regardless of the snake being dangerous or not in the situation, one should reduce the risk. Children and pets might do something unpredictable which the snake would react to. Get them away from the dangerous situation, in a calm manner, allowing you to handle the snake on your own.

How should you get rid of the snake?

Make sure to keep a distance to the snake, even if you have the slightest suspicion that you have a venomous snake in your home, then you should avoid getting too close to it, however, you shouldn't let it out of your sight either, as you might risk it moving and hiding somewhere else in the house. If the snake moves around, then leave the house and call an exterminator.

Open the door and guide the snake outside with a broom, if you are certain the snake isn't venomous. Don't try to push the snake with the broom. Open the door and gently direct it. Keep in mind, that the snake most likely ended up in your home by accident, and it's most likely trying to find its way out. Limit the places the snake can move around. A heavy blanket or a basket can be used to calm the snake down if it's agitated. If it can't see you or its surroundings, then it will calm down.

If you're in doubt about whether or not the snake is venomous, then you should under no circumstance, try to move it. If you do move the snake, then ensure you're wearing gloves. Move calmly toward the snake without scaring it. Call the exterminator and ask them to send an expert who can pick up the snake.

If you can't find the snake, but you know the whereabouts of where it's hiding, then you shouldn't try to catch it. Get your family members away from the area. If you can't find the snake, then you don't know whether or not it's venomous and agitated or not.

If you come across a snake outside the house, for instance in the garden, then you should leave it alone. If the snake isn't venomous, then it's not a hazard. It should be able to find its way out of the garden on its own, and it's very doubtful, that you will have to worry about it. If, however, the snake is venomous, then evacuate the area and send for help.

Never try to kill a snake. Most people get bitten when trying to kill a venomous snake.

So, to understand the beforementioned narrations, they are about the reality 1400 years ago where one couldn't contact an exterminator. The

advice found in the narrations is much in line with the instructions of current experts: Do not try to kill a snake in the home the minute you see it, partly because it could be harmless and thus actually beneficial for the ecosystem, and partly because one might risk that the snake bites, if it's poisonous. And not because it might be a Muslim Jinni.

Some people are Jinn

Some Muslims imagine that Jinn or Satan can shift shape and assume human shape. One of the most powerful, so-called, arguments for this incorrect belief is a narration about Iblees partaking in the battle of Badr and came in the shape of Suraqah Ibn Malik Ibn Ju'shum. In this examination, we shall settle with treating this so-called argument, as it is the foremost.

This narration is used by some of the interpreters of the Qur'an and by some authors of biographies (seerah) as an explanation to the following verse:

﴿وَإِذْ زَيْنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنِّي جَارٌ لَّكُمْ فَلَمَّا تَرَأَتِ الْفِئَتَانِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقَبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنْكُمْ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهََ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ﴾

"Satan beautified their deeds to them and said to them, 'No one today is more powerful than you, and I am your supporter.' But when the two armies confronted one another, and the pagans were defeated, then Satan betrayed his friends saying: 'I am free from you. I see what you do not see, and I fear Allah.'" And Allah is severe in His retribution."
(8:48)

There isn't, however, any narration or chain of narration leading back to the Prophet ﷺ, but instead, it's claimed that it is a statement by Ibn 'Abbas ؓ. Ibn 'Abbas ؓ didn't receive Revelation, and without attribution to the Prophet ﷺ, it's impossible for Ibn 'Abbas ؓ to know that Iblees morphed into something. This is sufficient as to why this narration should be rejected as a myth.

Even the attribution of this narration to Ibn 'Abbas ؓ is problematic, as the chain of narration is very doubtful:

Al-Qasim – al-Husain – Hijaj – Ibn Jurayj – Ibn 'Abbas

It includes Ibn Jurayj whose narrations from Ibn 'Abbas ؓ without any doubt should be rejected. This is due to the fact that Ibn Jurayj didn't hear anything from Ibn 'Abbas ؓ which makes it self-evident that this narration should be rejected.

There is another chain of narration belonging to a similar narration also leading back to Ibn 'Abbas ؓ:

Ibn al-'Itar – Ibrahim Bin al-Mundhir – 'Abdul Azeez Bin 'Imran – Hisham Bin Sa'd – Abdur Rabbih Bin Qays al-Ansari – Rifa'ah Bin Rafi'

But it includes 'Abdul Azeez Ibn 'Imran who is weak and rejected (matruk) according to *Tabdbee*, vol 6 by Ibn Hajar and *Mizan al-I'tidal*, vol 2 by adh-Dhahabi. Therefore, this chain of narration should naturally also be rejected.

The conclusion is that there aren't any authentic narrations about Jinn being able to shapeshift and take human shape.

Sexual intercourse with Jinn

Some Muslims have let their imagination run wild, so they imagine that Jinn and human beings can engage in sexual intercourse with each other.

They mention the following texts and explanations:

Text 1 when Allah ﷻ said to Iblees:

﴿وَشَارِكُهُمْ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ﴾

“Share their property and children with them.” (17:64)

The verse shows, according to them, that Satan takes part in one's offspring which occurs during intercourse leading to the woman becoming pregnant.

Text 2 when Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَمْ يَطْمِئْنَهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ﴾

“... untouched by man before them, and Jinn.” (55:56)

It is said about this verse that Allah ﷻ wouldn't mention both man and Jinn if it weren't possible for both to have intercourse with these women. The verse is, therefore, according to them, evidence for the possibility of Jinn and human beings having intercourse with each other.

Text 3 ash-Shibli mentions in his book *Akaam al-Marjaan fi Ahkaam al-Jaan*, page 65 that the explanation of the beforementioned verse (text 1) is that the Prophet ﷺ said:

إذا جامع الرجل امرأته ولم يسم انطوى الشيطان إلى إحليله فجامع معه

“If a man has intercourse with his wife and doesn't begin with *in the name of Allah* then Satan rolls himself around his urethra and thus has intercourse with her alongside the man.”

Ibn Taymiyyah wrote in his *Majmu' al-Fatawa*, vol 19:

وقد يتناكح الإنسان والجن ويولد بينهما ولد وهذا كثير معروف

“Human beings and Jinn engage in intercourse, and they conceive children. This is well known.”

We'll examine these arguments in the reverse order:

The quote from Ibn Taymiyyah is merely a claim which isn't confirmed by anything in reality. Nothing, in reality, indicates that human beings and Jinn engage in sexual intercourse nor that they conceive children with each other.

Text 3: In the *tafsir* by at-Tabari and al-Qurtubi, and in the book by as-Suyuti titled *Laqat al-Marjaan fi Ahkaam al-Jaan*, in which he refers to al-Hakim, at-Tirmidhi, and at-Tabari, we find that the statement is from Mujahid, and not from the Prophet ﷺ.

Since Mujahid didn't receive Revelation, one might wonder how he was to know what Satan does and doesn't, if the Prophet ﷺ didn't inform us about it. It's not defensible to assume that he might have heard this information from the Prophet ﷺ when there isn't any chain of narration leading back to him ﷺ. Additionally, even if this had been a statement of the Prophet ﷺ, then it would've been entirely in line with all the other statements in which the reference to Satan is a metaphor. The implications of this are, firstly, that we can disregard the unsubstantiated claim by Mujahid in our examination of whether or not it's possible for human beings and Jinn to engage in sexual intercourse with each other. Secondly, even if the statement were a part of Revelation, it wouldn't be evidence for the claim that human beings and Jinn can engage in sexual intercourse with each other.

Text 2 means that nobody has touched these women, not human beings nor Jinn. But the sentence construction shows that a distinction is made between the possible and the impossible, as the subject in the sentence is separated from each other, i.e., the rules about apposition, grammatically speaking, aren't upheld.

The verse says:

﴿لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ﴾

"... untouched by humans before them, and Jinn."

In the Arabic language, two juxtaposed subjects aren't allowed to be separated in the case of a conjunction connecting them together. More plainly explained, this means that in the formulation *A and B* one isn't allowed to separate A and B with words, as it causes confusion in some cases, and in other cases, it causes a distance.

The construction of the sentence shows that humans and Jinn aren't juxtaposed since the word *qablahum* separates them. I.e., the verse says *lam yatmithhunna insun qablahum walaa jaan*, with *qablahum* creating a distance between *إِنْسٌ (insun: humans)* and *جَانٌّ (jaanun: Jinn)*. If they were juxtaposed, then the verse should say *لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ قَبْلَهُمْ lam yatmithhunna insun walaa jaan qablahum*.

Furthermore, one can consider what the statement of Maryam would be worth, rhetorically speaking, if it was possible for women to engage in sexual intercourse with Jinn and conceive their children:

﴿ قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ ﴾

“She said: My Lord! when shall there be a son (born) to me, and man (bashaar) has not touched me?” (3:47)

﴿ قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا ﴾

“She said: ‘How can I have a son when no man (bashaar) has touched me, nor am I unchaste.’” (19:20)

The statement of Maryam *no man has touched me* shows that she didn't believe in the idea of conceiving children by Jinn, as her statement would then have encompassed it as well, for instance, *no man and no Jinni have touched me*.

It's not justifiable to claim that Jinn began having intercourse with human beings in the time of the Prophet ﷺ and thus after the time of Maryam since it would be an unsubstantiated claim. Just as it's unsubstantiated that Jinn can engage in sexual intercourse with human beings, to begin with.

The first verse merely means that Satan is one's partner figuratively speaking regarding one's disobedience towards Allah ﷻ, for instance, the property is acquired wrongfully, the children were born outside of wedlock, etc. It doesn't mean a partner literally speaking.

Another example of this kind of rhetorics is when we are informed that if we don't initiate eating a meal in the name of Allah, then Satan eats with us:

وعن جابر، رضى الله عنه قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: إذا دخل الرجل بيته، فذكر الله تعالى عند دخوله وعند طعامه، قال الشيطان لأصحابه: لا مبيت لكم ولا عشاء، وإذا دخل، فلم يذكر الله تعالى عند دخوله، قال الشيطان: أدركتم المبيت؛ وإذا لم يذكر الله تعالى عند طعامه قال: أدركتم المبيت والعشاء

“Jabir narrated: ‘When a person enters his house and mentions the name of Allah at the time of entering it, and while eating the food, Satan says: ‘You have no place to spend the night and no evening meal.’ But when he enters without mentioning the name of Allah, Satan says: ‘You have found a place to spend the night.’ And when he does not mention the name of Allah while eating food, Satan says: ‘You have found a place to spend the night and evening meal.’” (Muslim)

Nobody can justify the claim that the Jinn eat our food or take tiny bites of it. Nor can it be justified to interpret Jinn as bacterias or other absurd claims.

The point with associating something to Satan is to emphasize that it's something terrible. I.e., it's a good thing to remember Allah ﷻ when entering one's house by mentioning the name of Allah ﷻ, and it's a bad thing to refrain from doing so. Likewise, it's a good thing to mention the name of Allah ﷻ before eating, and it's a bad thing to refrain from doing so. This is what is meant by Satan or his companions taking part in the meal.

Jinn-possession

Some Muslims mention arguments for the possibility of Jinn to possess human beings; textual arguments. In what follows, we shall examine the textual arguments followed by an examination of the reality that has led to this myth.

The verse employed to argue for the possibility for Jinn-possession

Muslims who, mistakenly, believe that it's possible for Jinn to possess human beings, mention the following verse from the Koran:

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا ﴾

“Those who devour usury will not stand (on the Day of Resurrection) except like the standing of a person beaten by Shaytan leading him to insanity. That is because they say: ‘Trading is only like Riba’” (2:275)

In reality, it's completely incomprehensible why some scholars tried to employ this verse as evidence for the possibility of Satan and in extension Jinn (presuming Satan is a Jinni) being able to possess the human body.

What they call a line of reasoning goes something like this:

Those who devour usury will not stand on the Day of Judgement except like someone who is beaten by Satan leading him to insanity which is a way of expressing possession. When there is a comparison to one who is possessed, it must be possible since Allah ﷻ wouldn't make a comparison to something impossible. Therefore, it must be possible for Satan to beat somebody, drive him crazy, and finally to possess him.

This is factually speaking incorrect and wrong. In Arabic rhetorics, there are different kinds of similitudes. At the top level, they can be divided into realistic and unrealistic comparisons. Then they can be categorized by whether the compared-from element or the compared-to element is realistic or not. One of the categories is called *at-tashbih al-khayali* and entails a conceptual comparison with something else which can include an unrealistic comparison.

Ar-Rummani provides an explanation about similitudes in his book *an-Nukat fi I'jaz al-Qur'an* with examples of realistic and unrealistic comparisons:

التشبيه على وجهين: تشبيه بلاغة وتشبيه حقيقة. فتشبيه البلاغة كتشبيه أعمال الكفار بالسراب وتشبيه الحقيقة نحو: هذا دينار كهذا الدينار فخذ أيهما شئت

“Similitudes are of two kinds: A rhetorical comparison (*tashbih balaghah*) and a realistic (*tashbih haqiqah*). A rhetorical comparison is like comparing the actions of a non-Muslim to a mirage, while a realistic comparison is like saying: *This dinar is like that dinar, so take whichever you like.*”

The conceptual comparison is termed a rhetorical comparison in the terminology of ar-Rummani.

Another example from the Qur'an of a conceptual comparison is the following verse about the Tree az-Zaqqum in Hell:

﴿ إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِي أَصْلِ الْجَحِيمِ ، طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ ﴾

“Verily, it is a tree that springs out of the bottom of Hell-fire, the shoots of its fruit-stalks are like the heads of devils (ash-shayateen).” (37:64-65)

Nobody knows what heads of devils look like, but conceptually speaking, we know that this is something foul, so conceptually speaking, each one of us knows, that this isn't something positive – and the imagination is left alone to shape a concrete, foul, scary, mental image.

In Arabic one could compliment a woman by saying:

وجهها كالملاك

“Her face is like an angel.”

This makes sense, even for people who don't know what an angel looks like. I.e., conceptually speaking, we understand that this is something positive.

Hussein Abdul-Raof gives the following example of a similitude where the compared-to is something conceptual and just a figment of the imagination, in the book titled *Arabic rhetoric*:

وجهها كالشبح

“Her face is like a ghost.”

Similarly, we are familiar with these kinds of similitudes from other languages as well. For instance, one might compare something with a ghost in the English language:

“He was pale like a ghost.”

“You look like, you've seen a ghost.”

These three sentences including ghosts are entirely understandable and defensible to employ, even if the receiver and the sender don't believe

in ghosts since the imagined reality, which is compared to, is clear for both of them.

Regarding the word *مس* *mass* which can mean *to touch* it is employed in the Qur'an as a metaphor for the whispers of Satan:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ ﴾

“Surely those who guard (against evil), when a visitation from Satan touches them, they become mindful, then lo! they see.” (7:201)

﴿ وَادْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا أَيُّوبَ إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَسَّنِيَ الشَّيْطَانُ بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ ﴾

“Recall Our servant Job. When he prayed to his Lord saying, ‘Satan has afflicted (touched) me with hardship and torment.’” (38:41)

This is, self-evidently, not a reference to a physical touch.

The misunderstanding might be caused by a controversial narration:

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْأَعْلَى، عَنْ مَعْمَرٍ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ سَعِيدٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَا مِنْ مَوْلُودٍ يُوَلَّدُ إِلَّا نَخَسَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَيَسْتَهْلُ صَارِخًا مِنْ نَخَسَةِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِلَّا ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘No child is born, but he is pricked by Satan, and he begins to weep because of the pricking of Satan except the son of Mary and his mother.’” (Muslim, Ahmad)

Chain of narration: Abu Bakr Bin Abi Shaibah – Abd 'al-A'la – Ma'mar – az-Zuhri – Sa'id – Abu Hurairah

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ رَافِعٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَعْمَرٌ، ح وَحَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ الدَّارِمِيُّ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو الْيَمَانِ، أَخْبَرَنَا شُعَيْبٌ، جَمِيعًا عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، بِهَذَا الْإِسْنَادِ وَقَالَ يَمَسُّهُ حِينَ يُوَلَّدُ فَيَسْتَهْلُ صَارِخًا مِنْ مَسَةِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنِّيَاهُ

“Az-Zuhri said: ‘Satan touches you, when you are born, so you cry due to the touch of Satan.’” (Muslim)

The first chain of narration: Muhammad Bin Rafi' – Abd ul-Razzaq – Mamar – az-Zuhri

وَفِي حَدِيثِ شُعَيْبٍ مِنْ مَسِّ الشَّيْطَانِ

“In the narration by Shu'aib: 'From the touch of Satan.'” (Muslim)

The second chain of narration: Abu al-Yaman – Shu'aib – az-Zuhri

There are a lot of variants of the narration; each of them is singular. They all can be traced back to Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه, and all of them are included in the collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim.

The chain of narration is therefore singular; its authenticity depends on Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه since he is the only one who has narrated this story. Previously, we've mentioned that it's problematic to accept narrations solely narrated by Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه due to his terrible memory regarding narrators. This narration should, therefore, be rejected.

The content of the narration is problematic since not all children cry at birth. Even if one were to interpret the narration as a generalization, then from a rhetorical perspective it is worthless since what would be so special from a rhetorical and conceptual perspective that 'Isa عليه السلام and Maryam (Allah's peace be upon her) allegedly weren't touched by Satan at birth when this is the case of numerous people? This narration should therefore also be rejected due to its content.

Some scholars saw another problem with the content of this narration: The narration raises 'Isa عليه السلام and Maryam (May Allah be pleased with her) to a higher status than prophets and messengers. While attempting to remove this problem without rejecting the narration, some of them explained that the narration exempts all prophets and messengers from being touched by Satan at birth. For instance, Imam an-Nawawi wrote in his *sharh*:

واختار القاضي عياض أن جميع الأنبياء يشاركون فيها

“And al-Qadi 'Iyad interpreted this as including all the prophets.”

However, this isn't a valid interpretation since it's beyond the scope of the text, as the narration explicitly says that none of you are born without being touched or pricked by Satan except two specific persons

mentioned by name. The narration is placed in the collection of Muslim under the chapter *Bab Fada'il 'Isa* ﷺ, i.e., *The Chapter on the high status of Isa* – not the status of the Prophets and the Messengers. This is another reason for rejecting the narration.

As for the verb *يَتَخَبَّطُ* *yatakhabbatubu*, it means *to hit violently*, but it is also employed as a metaphor meaning *to be overwhelmed* by Satan in the guise of deviation. It was narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say the following prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَدْمِ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ التَّرَدِّي ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْغَرَقِ وَالْحَرَقِ وَالْهَرَمِ ،
وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ يَتَخَبَّطَنِي الشَّيْطَانُ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَمُوتَ فِي سَبِيلِكَ مُدْبِرًا ، وَأَعُوذُ
بِكَ أَنْ أَمُوتَ لَدِيغًا

“O Allah, I seek refuge in You from my house falling on me, I seek refuge in You from falling into an abyss, I seek refuge in You from drowning, burning, and decrepitude. I seek refuge in You from Satan harming me at the time of my death, I seek refuge in You from dying on Your path while retreating, and I seek refuge in Thee from dying of the sting or bite of a poisonous creature.” (Ahmad, an-Nasa'i & Abu Dawud)

In the explanation of this narration al-Adhimabadi wrote in *'Awn al-Ma'bud*, vol 4, page 287:

أن يتخبطني الشيطان أي: إبليس أو أحد أعوانه ، قيل : التخبط الإفساد ، والمراد إفساد العقل والدين ، وتخصيصه بقوله (عند الموت) ؛ لأن المدار على الخاتمة

وقال القاضي: أي من أن يمسنني الشيطان بنزغاته التي تزل الأقدام وتصارع العقول والأوهام

وأصل التخبط أن يضرب البعير الشيء بخف يده فيسقط قال الخطابي: استعاذته من تخبط الشيطان عند الموت هو أن يستولي عليه الشيطان عند مفارقتها الدنيا فيضله ويحول بينه وبين التوبة أو يعوقه عن إصلاح شأنه والخروج من مظلمة تكون قبله أو يؤيسه من رحمة الله تعالى أو يكره الموت ويتأسف على حياة الدنيا فلا يرضى بما قضاه الله من الفناء والنقلة إلى دار الآخرة فيختم له بسوء ويلقى الله وهو ساخط عليه

وقد روي أن الشيطان لا يكون في حال أشد على ابن آدم منه في حال الموت ، يقول لأعوانه: دونكم هذا ، فإنه إن فاتكم اليوم لم تلحقوه بعد اليوم نعوذ بالله من شره ، ونسأله أن يبارك لنا في ذلك المصراع ، وأن يجعل خير أيامنا يوم لقائه “That Satan overpowers him, i.e., Iblis or one of his companions. It is said: *at-takbbat* is corruption and the intended meaning is corruption in the guise of confusion in the field of understanding and practicing the religion, and it is specified by *‘inda al-maut* (on the death bed), as the intended meaning is the end.

Al-Qadi (‘Iyad) said: ‘I.e., from Satan confusing me with his evil whisper which makes people slip and causes confusion in the minds. The origin of the word is from a description of a camel trampling something maniacally with its foot causing it to break.’

Al-Khattabi said: ‘The Prophet ﷺ sought refuge in Allah from being confused by Satan on his death bed, which entails that Satan overpowers you the moment, you are leaving this world, misguides you, prevents you from repenting, prevents you from settling scores regarding the rights of others, makes you hopeless regarding the Compassion of Allah, or makes you hate death and prefer the life of this world in the sense that one isn’t content with the Decree of Allah regarding death and moving on to the Hereafter. This would lead to a bad ending, and one would meet, while He is angry with you.’

It has been narrated that Satan is never more eager to harm the children of Adam than on their death beds. He says to his helpers: ‘Go after this one, because if he gets away today, then you’ll never be able to catch him.’

We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of Satan, and we ask Him to bless us in that critical moment and to make that Day, we meet him, our best day.” – End of quote.

From the above mentioned it should be clear, that this verse is under no circumstance a valid argument for the idea of Jinn-possession.

The verse can be understood as a conceptual comparison between the one who believes that dealing with interest is the same as trade and a

crazy person on the Day of Judgement. Alternatively, one can understand the verse as implying, that one must be misguided by the whisper of Satan if one claims that dealing with interest is the same as trade.

Fakhruddin ar-Razi explains in his *tafsir* with the title *at-Tafsir al-Kabir aw Mafatih al-Ghayb*, why this verse isn't a durable argument for Jinn-possession:

أما قوله تعالى: { إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ } ففيه مسائل: المسألة الأولى: التخبیط معناه الضرب على غير استواء، ويقال للرجل الذي يتصرف في أمر ولا يهتدي فيه: إنه يخبیط خبط عشواء، وخبیط البعير للأرض بأخفافه، وتخبیطه الشيطان إذا مسّه بخيل أو جنون لأنه كالضرب على غير الاستواء في الادهاش، وتسمى إصابة الشيطان بالجنون والخيل خبطة، ويقال: به خبطة من جنون، والمس الجنون، يقال: مس الرجل فهو ممسوس وبه مس، وأصله من المس باليد، كأن الشيطان يمس الإنسان فيجنه، ثم سمي الجنون مساً، كما أن الشيطان يتخبطه ويطؤه برجله فيخبله، فسمي الجنون خبطة، فالتخبیط بالرجل والمس باليد، ثم فيه سؤالان: السؤال الأول: التخبیط تفعل، فكيف يكون متعدياً؟ الجواب: تفعل بمعنى فعل كثير، نحو تقسمه بمعنى قسمه، وتقطعه بمعنى قطعه. السؤال الثاني: بم تعلق قوله { مِنَ الْمَسِّ } قلنا: فيه وجهان أحدهما: بقوله { لَا يَقُومُونَ } والتقدير: لا يقومون من المس الذي لهم إلا كما يقوم الذي يتخبطه الشيطان والثاني: أنه متعلق بقوله { يقوم } والتقدير لا يقومون إلا كما يقوم المتخبط بسبب المس المسألة الثانية: قال الجبائي: الناس يقولون المصروع إنما حدثت به تلك الحالة لأن الشيطان يمسّه ويصرعه وهذا باطل، لأن الشيطان ضعيف لا يقدر على صرع الناس وقتلهم ويدل عليه وجوه: أحدها: قوله تعالى حكاية عن الشيطان { وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي } (إبراهيم: 22) وهذا صريح في أنه ليس للشيطان قدرة على الصرع والقتل والإيذاء والثاني: الشيطان إما أن يقال: إنه كثيف الجسم، أو يقال: إنه من الأجسام اللطيفة، فإن كان الأول وجب أن يرى ويشاهد، إذ لو جاز فيه أن يكون كثيفاً ويحضر ثم لا يرى لجاز أن يكون بحضرتنا شمس ورعود وبروق وجبال ونحن لا نراها، وذلك جهالة عظيمة، ولأنه لو كان جسماً كثيفاً فكيف يمكنه أن يدخل في باطن بدن الإنسان، وأما إن كان جسماً لطيفاً كالهواء، فمثل هذا يمتنع أن يكون فيه صلابة وقوة، فيمتنع أن يكون قادراً على أن يصرع الإنسان ويقتله الثالث: لو كان الشيطان يقدر على أن يصرع ويقتل لصح أن يفعل مثل معجزات الأنبياء عليهم الصلاة والسلام وذلك يجر إلى الطعن في النبوة الرابع: أن

الشیطان لو قدر علی ذلك فلم لا یصرع جمیع المؤمنین ولم لا یخبطهم مع شدة عداوته لأهل الإیمان، ولم لا یغصب أموالهم، ویفسد أحوالهم، ویفشي أسرارهم، ویزیل عقولهم؟ وكل ذلك ظاهر الفساد، واحتج القائلون بأن الشیطان یقدر علی هذه الأشياء بوجهین الأول: ما روي أن الشیاطین فی زمان سلیمان بن داود علیهما السلام كانوا یعملون الأعمال الشاقة علی ما حکي الله عنهم أنهم كانوا یعملون له ما یشاء من محاریب وتمائیل وجفان كالجوابی وقدور راسیات والجواب عنه: أنه تعالی کلفهم فی زمن سلیمان فعند ذلك قدروا علی هذه الأفعال وكان ذلك من المعجزات لسلیمان علیه السلام والثانی: أن هذه الآیة وهي قوله { یَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ } صریح فی أن یتخبطه الشیطان بسبب مسه والجواب عنه: أن الشیطان یمسه بوسوسته المؤذیة التي یحدث عندها الصرع، وهو کقول آیوب علیه السلام { أَنَّى مَسَّنِيَ الشَّيْطَانُ بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ } (ص: 41) وإنما یحدث الصرع عند تلك الوسوسة لأن الله تعالی خلقه من ضعف الطباع، وغلبة السوداء علیه بحيث یخاف عند الوسوسة فلا یجترأ فیصرع عند تلك الوسوسة، كما یصرع الجبان من الموضع الخالی، ولهذا المعنی لا یوجد هذا الخبط فی الفضلاء الکاملین، وأهل الحزم والعقل وإنما یوجد فیمن به نقص فی المزاج وخلل فی الدماغ فهذا جملة کلام الجبائی فی هذا الباب، وذكر القفال فی وجه آخر، وهو أن الناس یضیفون الصرع إلى الشیطان وإلى الجن، فنخوطبوا علی ما تعارفوه من هذا، وأيضاً من عادة الناس أنهم إذا أرادوا تفتیح شیء أن یضیفوه إلى الشیطان، كما فی قوله تعالی: { طَلَعَهَا كَأَنَّهَ رُؤُوسُ الشَّيْطَانِ } (الصفافات: 65)

المسألة الثالثة: للمفسرین فی الآیة أقوال الأول: أن أكل الربا یبعث یوم القيامة مجنوناً وذلك كالعلامة المخصوصة بأكل الربا، فعرفه أهل الموقف لتلك العلامة أنه أكل الربا فی الدنيا، فعلى هذا معنی الآیة: أنهم یقومون مجانین، کمن أصابه الشیطان بجنون والقول الثانی: قال ابن منبه: یرید إذا بعث الناس من قبورهم خرجوا مسرعین لقوله { یَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعاً } (المعارج: 43) إلا أكلة الربا فإنهم یقومون ویسقطون، كما یقوم الذي یتخبطه الشیطان من المس وذلك لأنهم أكلوا الربا فی الدنيا، فأرباه الله فی بطونهم یوم القيامة حتی أثقلهم فهم ینهضون، ویسقطون، ویریدون الإسراع، ولا یقدرون، وهذا القول غیر الأول لأنه یرید أن أكلة الربا لا یمکنهم الإسراع فی المشی بسبب ثقل البطن، وهذا لیس من الجنون فی شیء، ویتأكد هذا القول بما روي فی قصة الإسراء أن النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم انطلق به جبریل إلى رجال كل واحد منهم کالیبت الضخم، یقوم أحدهم فتمیل به بطنه فیصرع، فقلت: یا جبریل من هؤلاء؟ قال: { الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ }

والقول الثالث: أنه مأخوذ من قوله تعالى: { إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ } (الأعراف: 201) وذلك لأن الشيطان يدعو إلى طلب اللذات والشهوات والاشتغال بغير الله، فهذا هو المراد من مس الشيطان، ومن كان كذلك كان في أمر الدنيا متخبطاً، فتارة الشيطان يجره إلى النفس والهوى، وتارة الملك يجره إلى الدين والتقوى، فحدثت هناك حركات مضطربة، وأفعال مختلفة، فهذا هو الخبط الحاصل بفعل الشيطان وأكل الربا لا شك أنه يكون مفرطاً في حب الدنيا متهاكاً فيها، فإذا مات على ذلك الحب صار ذلك الحب حجاباً بينه وبين الله تعالى، فالخبط الذي كان حاصلاً في الدنيا بسبب حب المال أورثه الخبط في الآخرة، وأوقعه في ذل الحجاب، وهذا التأويل أقرب عندي من الوجهين اللذين نقلناهما
عمن نقلنا

“With regards to the statement of Allah: ‘Except as one Satan has beaten and driven mad,’ there are some aspects of it.

The first aspect is that the word *التخبط at-takhabbat* means *to hit with random frequencies*. It is said about a man who humiliates himself in an issue, and who isn’t guided in the issue, that *he is beaten by blindness*. A camel hits the ground with the underside of its foot. Satan hits a person with a touch of insanity because it’s equivalent to being hit with random frequencies of confusion, and the influence of Satan with insanity is termed *خبطة khabtab*. And it is said: ‘With him, there is the beating of insanity (*al-junoon*), and *al-mas* is *al-junoon*.’ And it is said: A man becomes *mass*, then he’s *mamsoos* and with him, there is *mass*. And *min al-mas* is originally with the hand equal to Satan touching man and driving him insane. After that the person is called *massan* who has been driven insane by Satan, then insanity is termed *خبطة khabtab*, as hitting someone and *al-mas* is with the hand. Then there are two questions:

The first question: *التخبط at-takhabbat* is (of the form) *تفعل tafa’ala*, so how can it be transitive? And the answer is: There are numerous examples of verbs which behave accordingly; *تقسمه taqassamahu* with the meaning *قسمه qasamahu* and *تقطعه taqata’ahu* with the meaning *قطعه qata’ahu*.

The second question: What is *من المس min al-mas* related to? There are two stances regarding this:

The first stance: The statement لَا يَقُومُونَ *la yaqumun* meaning: *They won't stand except as someone who has been driven insane by the touch of Satan.*

The second stance: Al-Jubba'i said: 'Some people say *possessed, and this event is about this state because Satan touches them and possesses them*, and this isn't correct since Satan is weak. In no way is it possible for him to possess people and to kill them; two things indicate this:

The first is, what Allah informs us Satan will say:

﴿ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَن دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي ﴾

"I had no authority over you, except that I invited you, and you answered me (accepted the invitation)." (14:22)

This clearly shows that Satan doesn't have the ability to possess, kill, or harm people.

The second is, that if one says Satan is a substantial body or an aerial body. If it's the former, then it should be possible to sense him. If it's the case that he is a solid material, and we still can't sense him, how is it that we don't have a sun, lightning, and mountains that we can't sense – and this is the peak of ignorance. Furthermore, if he is a solid material, how would it be possible for him to enter man? If it's the case that Satan is an aerial body, then there isn't any hardness or power in him, which prevents him from being able to possess or harm people.

The third is if Satan could possess or kill people then it would be like the miracles of the Prophets which is a mockery of the Prophethood.

The fourth is if Satan could do so, would he not then possess all the believers, and wouldn't he strike them violently due to his hatred towards the people of Belief? Wouldn't he take their wealth with force, pester their circumstances, reveal their secrets, and make their mind disappear? All of this is part of discord. And those who say that Satan has the ability to do so, in their logic, two things appear to support their view: The first is, what is narrated about the devils (*shayateen*) in the time of Sulaiman who performed hard labor according to what Allah informed us about and whatever Sulaiman wished them to construct for him.

And the answer to this is that Allah ﷻ imposed it upon them in the time of Sulaiman and due to that they received the ability to perform such acts, and it was one of the miracles of Sulaiman ﷺ. And the second is, the statement *يَخَبِّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ* *yatakhabbatuhu ash-Shaytan* clearly means that Satan possesses someone by *mass* thus driving him insane. And the answer to this is: Satan touches him by whispering to him, until he has a panic attack, like when Ayyub ﷺ said:

﴿ أَنَّى مَسَّنِيَ الشَّيْطَانُ بِنُصْبٍ وَعَذَابٍ ﴾

“Satan has touched me with affliction and punishment.” (38:41)

And panic attacks occur due to this whispering because Allah ﷻ provided this person with a weak nature, so depression overwhelms him with him fearing this whisper and fails to ignore it, so he gets a panic attack due to it like a coward who gets a panic attack due to being alone at deserted places or in the dark. This is why this beating doesn't occur to people of virtue and people with a strong will and mind. It occurs, however, amongst those who have flaws and wantings in their state of mind and confusion in their minds.' This is the end of the quote from al-Jubba'i.

And al-Qaffal explained in a different manner that people used to explain the cause behind epilepsy as being caused by Satan and Jinn, and they associated these things with each other. Furthermore, people used to associate the things they wanted to describe as something foul with Satan like in the statement of Allah ﷻ:

﴿ طُلُعَهَا كَأَنَّهُ رُؤُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ ﴾

“Its branches are like heads of Devils.” (37:65)

The third question: The interpreters of the Qur'an regarding the verse; the first stance: That the one who devours usury will stand like someone who is crazy, and this is a distinctive characteristic of the one who devours usury in order for the people of the Stance to recognize the people who used to devour usury in this life. So, the verse means that they will stand and be crazy as were they driven insane by Satan. And the other stance is: Ibn Minbah said: The meaning is that when

mankind shall come out from their graves, they will rush out like in His statement:

﴿يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا﴾

“(The Day when) they will rush out from their graves.” (70:43)

Except for the devourers of usury. They will stand up and tumble around like someone who Satan has beaten. And this is due to, they used to devour usury in this life, so Allah will increase in their bellies until it overburdens them to the extent, they carry around a heavy burden (in their stomach) and accordingly tumble around. They will wish to rush, but they will be unable to do so. This stance differs from the former because their inability to rush is due to the weight in their bellies and not insanity in any way whatsoever. And this stance is supported by what was narrated about the Night Journey (Isra') that the Prophet ﷺ went with Jibril to some men, each of them was huge like a giant. One of them stood, and his belly inflated causing him to fall down, so I asked: 'O Jibril, who are these?' He answered:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ﴾

“Those who devour usury will not stand except as someone beaten by Satan leading him to insanity.”

And the third stance is that it should be understood in the light of the statement of Allah ﷻ:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ﴾

Verily, those who guard (against evil), when a visitation from the Shaitan afflicts them, they become mindful, then lo! They see. (7:201)

And this is because Satan calls to pleasure, enjoyments, and distraction by other than Allah. This is what is intended by the touch of Satan. Whosoever is like this will be beaten (*mutakhabbatan*) regarding the affairs of this life, enabling Satan from time to another to draw the person towards the lusts, and enabling the angel from time to another to draw the person towards the religion and piety – which is why there will be confusion and different kinds of actions. This is the achievement of Satan, and the devourers of usury are without doubt infatuated with love for this world and succumbed to it, so when they die with this

love, then this love will become a barrier between them and Allah. So, *being beaten* occurred in this life due to love for wealth resulting in *being beaten* in the Hereafter, leading to a humiliating barrier. And this is the interpretation we prefer amongst the two stances which we've presented." – End of quote.

It's entirely possible that some Muslims reached their flawed conclusion and read Jinn-possession into the verse, in spite of the verse doesn't carry that understanding, due to not knowing that the narrations they were employing are weak. We shall examine them in the following.

Weak narrations for Jinn-possession

Narration 1 which is found with three chains of narration in *Musnad Ahmad Bin Hanbal*:

حدثنا عبد الله بن نمير عن عثمان بن حكيم قال أخبرني عبد الرحمن بن عبد العزيز عن يعلى بن مرة قال لقد رأيت من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ثلاثا ما رآها أحد قبلي ولا يراها أحد بعدي لقد خرجت معه في سفر حتى إذا كنا ببعض الطريق مررنا بامرأة جالسة معها صبي لها فقالت يا رسول الله هذا صبي أصابه بلاء وأصابنا منه بلاء يؤخذ في اليوم ما أدري كم مرة قال ناوليني فرفعته إليه فجعلته بينه وبين واسطة الرجل ثم فغر فاه فنفت فيه ثلاثا وقال بسم الله أنا عبد الله أخسأ عدو الله ثم ناولها إياه فقال القينا في الرجعة في هذا المكان فأخبرنا ما فعل قال فذهبا ورجعنا فوجدناها في ذلك المكان معها شياه ثلاث فقال ما فعل صبيك فقالت والذي بعثك بالحق ما حسسنا منه شيئا حتى الساعة ...

"Abdullah Bin Numayr narrated from Uthman Bin Hakam that Abdur Rahman Bin Abdelazeez told him that Ya'la Ibn Marrah said: 'I saw the Messenger of Allah do three things which no one saw before or after. I was on an expedition with him. On the way, we passed by a woman who was sitting at the wayside with a little boy. She called out: 'O Messenger of Allah, this boy is afflicted with a tribulation, and we are also afflicted with a tribulation through him. I don't know how many times a day he gets seizures.' He said: 'Give me the boy.' She raised the boy up to the Prophet. He placed the boy between himself and the middle of the saddle, opened the boy's mouth, and blew into it three times while saying: 'In the name of Allah. I am the Slave of Allah. Come out, O enemy of Allah!' Then he returned the boy to her and said: 'Meet

us, then we return, and inform us about how he is doing.' We left the place. When we returned, we found her at the same place with three sheep. When he asked her: 'How is your son doing?' She replied: 'By the One Who sent you with the truth, we haven't seen anything unusual in his behavior since then up to now.' ..." (Ahmad)

Chain of narration 1: Abdullah Bin Numayr – Uthman Bin Hakam – Abdur Rahman Bin Abdulazeez – Ya'la Ibn Marrah

Al-Arnaut wrote in his *tabqeeq* to *Musnad Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal* in vol 29, that this chain of narration is weak due to AbdurRahman Bin AbdelAzeez, as he is unknown (*majhul*). Yahya Ibn Ma'in wrote the same.

This is sufficient reason for rejecting the narration through this chain of narration.

Chain of narration 2: Aswad Bin 'Aamir – Abu Bakr Bin 'Ayash – Habib Bin Abi 'Amrah – Minhal Bin 'Amr – Ya'la

Al-Arnaut wrote in his *taqbeeq*, that this chain of narration is weak, as it's broken (*inqita'*), as Minhal narrates from Ya'la whom he didn't meet.

It's self-evidently sufficient reason for rejecting the narration through this chain of narration, as it's not possible to narrate something from someone whom one never met.

Chain of narration 3: 'AbdurRazzaq – Ma'mar – 'Ata Bin Sa'ib – 'Abdullah Bin Hafs – Ya'la Bin Marrah ath-Thaqafi

'Abdullah Bin Hafs is declared unknown (*majhul*) by Shu'aib al-Arnaut in his *tabqeeq* vol 29; Ahmad Shakir in his *tabqeeq*, vol 13; Yahya Ibn Ma'in in *al-Kamal*, vol 5, and Ibn Hajar in *Taghrib at-Tabdhib*.

Regarding 'Ata Bin Sa'ib it is said that he didn't have a good memory according to al-Arnaut in his *tabqeeq*, vol 29; Adh-Dhahabi in *Tarikh al-Islam*, vol 3.

Al-Arnout mentions in his *tabqeeq*, that al-Bayhaqi mentions the narration in *ad-Dala'il* through 'Abd ur-Razzaq with an addition in the chain of narration, 'Abdullah Bin as-Sa'ib, between 'Ata Bin Sa'ib and 'Abdullah Bin Hafs, and that this is an error.

This is sufficient reason for rejecting the chain of narration. And since all three chains of narrations should be rejected, the narration should likewise be rejected due to being weak.

Narration 2, which is found in multiple collections, with shorter and longer variations:

أن جدها الزارع انطلق إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فانطلق معه باين له مجنون - أو ابن أخت له- قال جدي: فلما قدمنا على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قلت: إن معي ابناً لي - أو ابن أخت لي- مجنون، أتيتك به تدعو الله له قال: (اثنني به) قال: فانطلقت به إليه وهو في الركاب، فأطلقت عنه وألقيت عنه ثياب السفر وألبسته ثوبين حسنين، وأخذت بيده حتى انتهيت به إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: (أدنه مني، اجعل ظهره مما يليني) قال بمجامع ثوبه من أعلاه وأسفله؛ فجعل يضرب ظهره حتى رأيت بياض إبطيه، ويقول: (أخرج عدو الله، أخرج عدو الله) فأقبل ينظر نظر الصحيح ليس بنظره الأول، ثم أقعده رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بين يديه، فدعا له بماء فمسح وجهه ودعا له، فلم يكن في الوفد أحد بعد دعوة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يفضل عليه

"Umm Abaan bint al-Wazi' bin Zari' ibn 'Amir al-'Abdi narrated on her father's authority that her grandfather once went to the Prophet ﷺ with his son or his sister's son. She said: My grandfather said: 'When we reached the Prophet, I said: 'I have come to you with my son (or nephew) who is possessed so that you might pray to Allah for him.' The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Bring him to me.' So, I went back to the caravan where I had left him, loosened the rope, put some new clothes on him, and brought him to the Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ said: 'Place him so I can access his back.' He also ordered that his clothes should be taken off. He then raised his hands and placed them on the child's back in a manner enabling me to see his armpits. He said: 'Come out, O enemy of Allah! Come out, O enemy of Allah!' The boy then began to look with his normal look in his eyes and not the former. Then the Prophet made him sit in front of him and sent for some water which he used to rub the child's face with, and the Prophet prayed for him. After the

prayer of the Prophet for the child, no one was superior to him.” (Ahmad, Abu Dawud, *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir* at-Tabarani & *az-Zawa'id al-Haithami*)

Chain: (Matar –) Umm Aban – her father, al-Wazi' – her grandfather, az-Zari

Al-Arnout wrote in his *tabqeeq*, vol 39, that this chain of narration is weak due to Umm Aban, as she is unknown (*majhul*), and that the only one who narrates from her is Matar who isn't known to be trustworthy. Al-Arnout mentions that Ibn Hibban wrote about Matar that he narrates narrations with broken chains of narrations (*al-maqati*).

Some might mention that al-Arnout wrote that Abu Hatim wrote محله الصدق about Matar (roughly: *his place is truthfulness*). But this wording means, according to Ibn Kathir in his *al-Ba'ith al-Hathith*, vol 1, as explained by Ibn Abi Hatim himself that the wordings محله الصدق, صدق الصدق, and فهو ممن يكتب حديثه وينظر فيه لا بأس به mean *that the narration is written down and investigated*.

Since Umm Aban is unknown, then this is sufficient reason for rejecting the narration as weak. Matar is the only one who narrates from her, and he himself is controversial which doesn't help much in this regard.

Narration 3 has two chains of narrations, one with and the other without the link *from his father*:

حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ، حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ، عَنِ الْمِنْهَالِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، عَنْ يَعْلَى بْنِ مُرَّةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ - قَالَ وَكِيعٌ: مُرَّةَ يَعْنِي الثَّقَفِيَّ، وَلَمْ يَقُلْ: مُرَّةَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ، أَنَّ امْرَأَةً جَاءَتْ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَعَهَا صَبِيٌّ لَهَا بِهِ لَمَمٌ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: اخْرُجْ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ، أَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَالَ: فَبَرَأَ فَأَهْدَتْ إِلَيْهِ كَبْشَيْنِ، وَشَيْئًا مِنْ أَقِطٍ، وَشَيْئًا مِنْ سَمْنٍ، قَالَ: فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: خُذِ الْأَقِطَ وَالسَّمْنَ وَاحِدَ الْكَبْشَيْنِ، وَرُدِّ عَلَيْهَا الْآخَرَ

“Waki narrated from al-A'mash from al-Minhal Bin 'Amr from Ya'la Ibn Marrah from his father: A woman came to the Prophet with a boy who was afflicted. The Prophet said: 'Come out, O enemy of Allah! I

am the Messenger of Allah.’ The boy was cured. The woman gave him two sheep, butter, and cheese. The Prophet said: ‘Take the butter, cheese, and one sheep, and return the rest to her.’” (Ahmad)

Chain: al-A’mash – Waki – al-Minhal Bin ‘Amr – Ya’la (- his father)

As mentioned before al-Minhal didn’t meet Ya’la which is a sufficient reason for rejecting the chain of narration, and accordingly, the narration should be rejected as weak.

Narration 4 is mentioned by as-Suyuti in his book *al-Khasa’is al-Kubra*, vol 2, pages 116-117. Regarding this as-Suyuti writes, that Ahmad, ad-Darimi, at-Tabarani, al-Bayhaqi, and Abu Nu’aym mentioned the narration from Ibn ‘Abbas:

حدثنا يزيد ، حدثنا حماد بن سلمة ، عن فرقد السبخي ، عن سعيد بن جبير ، عن ابن عباس أن امرأة جاءت بولدها إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالت : يا رسول الله إن به لهما ، وإنه يأخذه عند طعامنا فيفسد علينا طعامنا قال : فمسح رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم صدره ، ودعا له ، ففتح ثعته ، فخرج منه مثل الجرو الأسود يسعى

“A woman came with her son and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, my son is possessed. He gets seizures every morning and every evening, and it’s ruining our lives.’ The Messenger of Allah stroke his head and prayed for him. Then the boy vomited, and out of his mouth came a black puppy and ran away.”

Chain of narration: Yazeed – Hammad Bin Salamah – Farqad as-Sabakhi – Sa’eed Bin Jubayr – Ibn ‘Abbas

Al-Arnout wrote in his *tahqeeq*, vol 4, pages 37-38, that this chain of narration is weak due to Farqad, and that al-Bukhari said, that this narration is rejected, that Ahmad and Abu Hatim said that he doesn’t have strength. And also, that Yahya al-Qatan said: *I don’t like his narrations* and that he is weak according to Ibn Sa’d, Ibn al-Madani, an-Nasa’i, Ya’qub Bin Shibah, and others.

This is sufficient reason for rejecting the chain of narration and the narration.

Narration 5:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَشَّارٍ، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْأَنْصَارِيُّ، حَدَّثَنِي عُيَيْنَةُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ أَبِي الْعَاصِ، قَالَ لَمَّا اسْتَعْمَلَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الطَّائِفِ جَعَلَ يَغْرِضُ لِي شَيْءٌ فِي صَلَاتِي حَتَّى مَا أُدْرِي مَا أَصْلِي فَلَمَّا رَأَيْتُ ذَلِكَ رَحَلْتُ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ فَقَالَ ابْنُ أَبِي الْعَاصِ قُلْتُ نَعَمْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ مَا جَاءَ بِكَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ عَرَضَ لِي شَيْءٌ فِي صَلَاتِي حَتَّى مَا أُدْرِي مَا أَصْلِي قَالَ ذَاكَ الشَّيْطَانُ أَذْنُهُ فَذَنَزْتُ مِنْهُ فَجَلَسْتُ عَلَى صُدُورِ قَدَمَيْ قَالَ فَضَرَبَ صَدْرِي بِيَدِهِ وَتَقَلَّ فِي فَمِي وَقَالَ اخْرُجْ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ فَفَعَلَ ذَلِكَ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ الْحَقُّ بِعَمَلِكَ قَالَ فَقَالَ عُثْمَانُ فَلَعَمْرِي مَا أَحْسَبُهُ خَالِطَنِي بَعْدُ

“It was narrated that ‘Uthman Bin Abul-’As said: ‘The Messenger of Allah appointed me as a governor to Ta’if. After that, I got confused during prayer to the extent that I didn’t know what I was doing. When I realized it, I traveled to the Messenger of Allah, and he said: ‘Son of Abul-’As?’ I said: ‘Yes, O Messenger of Allah.’ He asked: ‘What brings you here?’ He said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, I get confused during prayer to the extent, I don’t know what I’m doing.’ He said: ‘It is Satan. Come here.’ I came close to him, and I sat down at the frontal part of my feet, then he beat me in my chest with his hand, put some saliva in my mouth and said: ‘O enemy of Allah, come out!’ He repeated this, three times, and said: ‘Return to your work.’ ‘Uthman said: ‘I never got confused after that.’ (Ibn Majah)

Chain of narration: Muhammad Bin Bashir – Muhammad Bin ‘Abdullah al-Ansari – ‘Uyayna Bin Abdur Rahman Bin Jushan – ‘Uthman Bin Abi al-’As ath-Thaqafi

Muhammad Bin ‘Abdullah al-Ansari is controversial according to adh-Dhahabi in his *Siyyar A’lam*; some scholars classified him as trustworthy, while others, for instance, Abu Dawud said about him:

تغير تغيرا شديدا

“Changed a lot.”

And Abu Abdullah said:

ما كان يضع الأنصاري عند أصحاب الحديث إلا النظر في الرأي

“Al-Ansari isn’t prioritized amongst people of narrations; his statements are examined.”

There are examples that his narrations were rejected, for instance, Abu Khaithamah said:

أنكر يحيى بن سعيد حديث الأنصاري عن حبيب بن الشهيد، عن ميمون، عن ابن عباس
 “Yahya Bin Sa’id rejected one the narrations of al-Ansari from Habib Bin ash-Shahid from Maimun from Ibn ‘Abbas ...”

Since the chain of narration is singular, then a controversial narrator in the chain of narration is sufficient reason for rejecting it.

There is another variant of this narration in *Mu’jam al-Kabir*, vol 9 by at-Tabarani:

عن عبد الأعلى: حدثنا عبد الله بن عبد الرحمن الطائفي عن عبد الله بن الحكم عن عثمان بن بشر قال: سمعت عثمان بن أبي العاص يقول: شكوت إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم نسيان القرآن، فضرب صدري بيده فقال: يا شيطان اخرج من صدر عثمان قال عثمان: فما نسيت منه شيئاً بعد، أحببت أن أذكره

”Uthman Bin Bishr said: ‘I heard ‘Uthman Bin Abi al-’As say: ‘I complained to the Messenger of Allah that I forgot the Qur’an, then he beat me on my chest and said: ‘O Satan, get out from ‘Uthman’s chest.’” ‘Uthman said: ‘I never forgot anything from it after that. I became fond of memorizing it.”

Chain of narration: Abdul-A’la – Abdullah Bin AbdurRahman at-Ta’ifi – Abdullah Bin al-Hakam – ‘Uthman Bin Bishr – ‘Uthman Bin Abi al-’As

There is another variant of this narration mentioned by al-Bayhaqi in his work, *Dala’il an-Nabuwah*, vol 5:

وأخبرنا أبو بكر القاضي ، أخبرنا أبو منصور محمد بن أحمد الأزهرى ، حدثنا الحسين بن إدريس الأنصاري ، مولاهم ، حدثنا الصلت بن مسعود البصري ، حدثنا معتمر بن سليمان ، قال : سمعت عبد الله بن عبد الرحمن الطائفي ، يحدث عن عمه عمرو بن أويس ، عن عثمان

بن أبي العاص ، قال : استعملني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأنا أصغر الستة الذين وفدوا عليه من ثقيف ، وذلك أنني كنت قرأت سورة البقرة ، فقلت : يا رسول الله إن القرآن ينفلت مني ، فوضع يده على صدري ، وقال : يا شيطان اخرج من صدر عثمان ، فما نسيت شيئاً بعده أريد حفظه

“Abu Bakr al-Qadi narrated: ‘Uthman said: ‘The Messenger of Allah employed me, and I was the youngest of the 6 who were sent to Thaqif. And I use to recite the chapter al-Baqarah, so I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, the Qur’an escapes me.’ He placed his hand on my chest and said: ‘O Satan, get out from ‘Uthman’s chest.’ After that, I never forgot anything, I wished to memorize.”

Chain of narration: Abu Bakr al-Qadi – Abu Mansur Muhammad Bin Ahmad al-Azhari – al-Husayn Bin Idris al-Ansari – Salat Bin Mas’ud al-Basri – Mu’tamar Bin Sulaiman – Abdullah Bin AbdurRahman at-Ta’ifi – ‘Amru Bin Uwais – ‘Uthman Bin Abi al-’As

At-Ta’ifi is present in both chains of narration and was classified as ‘*not strong*,’ and it was said about him that he makes mistakes and imagines things. Ibn Hajr wrote about him in *Taqrib at-Tabdheeb*, vol 2:

صدوق يخطئ ويهم

“Truthful, makes mistakes, and imagines things.”

An-Nasa’i wrote about him in *ad-Du’afa’ wal-Matrukeen* ليس بالقوي, i.e., ‘*not strong*.’ Ibn Abi Hatim wrote about him in *al-Jarh wat-Ta’deel*, vol 2:

ليس هو بقوي ، وهو لين الحديث

“He isn’t strong, and he is lenient with narrations.”

In the book *ad-Du’afa’ wal-Kadhibin* by ‘Umar Bin Ahmad Bin Shahin he is described as ضعيف, i.e., weak.

This is sufficient for rejecting the narration with these two chains of narration.

There is yet another variant of this narration mentioned by Abu Nu'aym in *Dala'il an-Nabuwah*, vol 1:

حدثنا عبد الله بن محمد بن جعفر ثنا علي بن سعيد ثنا عباس الدوري ثنا عثمان بن عبد الوهاب الثقفي ثنا أبي ، عن يونس عن الحسن ، عن عثمان بن أبي العاص قال: شكوت إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سوء حفظي للقرآن قال: ذلك شيطان يقال له خنزب ، اذن مني يا عثمان ثم تفل في فمي فوضع يده على صدري فوجدت بردها بين كتفي فقال: يا شيطان اخرج من صدر عثمان قال: فما سمعت شيئا بعد ذلك إلا حفظته

Chain of narration: Abdullah Bin Muhammad Bin Ja'far – 'Ali Bin Sa'id – 'Abbas ad-Dawri – 'Uthman Bin AbdulWahhab ath-Thaqafi – His father – Yunus – al-Hasan – 'Uthman Bin Abi al-'As

A similar variant is mentioned by al-Baihaqi in *Dala'il an-Nabuwah*:

أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ الْحَسَنِ الْقَاضِي ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو سَهْلٍ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ زِيَادٍ الْقَطَّانُ ، حَدَّثَنَا زَكَرِيَّا بْنُ يَحْيَى أَبُو يَحْيَى النَّاقِدُ ، حَدَّثَنَا عُثْمَانُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْوَهَّابِ الثَّقَفِيُّ ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي ، عَنْ يُونُسَ ، وَعَنْبَسَةَ ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ ، عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ أَبِي الْعَاصِ ، قَالَ: شَكُوتُ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سُوءَ حِفْظِي لِلْقُرْآنِ ، فَقَالَ: ذَلِكَ شَيْطَانٌ يُقَالُ لَهُ خِنْزَبٌ ، اذْنُ مَيْيَ يَا عُثْمَانُ ، ثُمَّ وَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَى صَدْرِي فَوَجَدْتُ بَرْدَهَا بَيْنَ كَتِفَيْي ، وَقَالَ: اخْرُجْ يَا شَيْطَانُ مِنْ صَدْرِ عُثْمَانَ ، قَالَ: فَمَا سَمِعْتُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ شَيْئًا إِلَّا حَفِظْتُ

Chain of narration: Abu Bakr Ahmad Bin al-Hasan al-Qadi – Abu Sahl Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Ziyad al-Qattan – Zakariya Bin Yahya Abu Yahya an-Naqid – 'Uthman Bin AbdulWahhab ath-Thaqafi – Hans far – Yunus, and 'Anbasah – al-Hasan – 'Uthman Bin Abi al-'As

Both the chains of narration lead back to 'Uthman ath-Thaqafi who is described as a liar by Yahya Ibn Ma'in in his *Ma'rifah*, vol 1, he is asked about 'Uthman:

ذكرت عنده (عثمان بن عبد الوهاب بن عبد المجيد الثقفي) فقال: هذا كذاب خبيث
 “Uthman Bin AbdulWahhab Bin AbdulMajid ath-Thaqafi was mentioned in front of him, and he said: ‘This one is a filthy liar.’”

Both chains of narration leading back to 'Uthman Bin 'AbdulWahhab ath-Thaqafi should, therefore, be rejected.

There are two authentic variants of the narrations in the collection *Sahih Muslim* about 'Uthman which might be the ones distorted by others and thus giving rise to the myths about the Prophet (saw) performing exorcism on 'Uthman:

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ طَلْحَةَ، حَدَّثَنِي عُثْمَانُ بْنُ أَبِي الْعَاصِ الثَّقَفِيُّ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَهُ أُمُّ قَوْمِكَ قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنِّي أَجِدُ فِي نَفْسِي شَيْئًا قَالَ اذْنُهُ فَجَلَسَنِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ثُمَّ وَضَعَ كَفَّهُ فِي صَدْرِي بَيْنَ ثَدْيَيْ ثُمَّ قَالَ تَحَوَّلْ فَوَضَعَهَا فِي ظَهْرِي بَيْنَ كَتِفَيْ ثُمَّ قَالَ أُمُّ قَوْمِكَ فَمَنْ أُمُّ قَوْمًا فَلْيُخَفَّفْ فَإِنَّ فِيهِمُ الْكَبِيرَ وَإِنَّ فِيهِمُ الْمَرِيضَ وَإِنَّ فِيهِمُ الضَّعِيفَ وَإِنَّ فِيهِمُ ذَا الْحَاجَةِ وَإِذَا صَلَّى أَحَدُكُمْ وَحْدَهُ فَلْيُصَلِّ كَيْفَ شَاءَ

“‘Uthman Bin Abu al-’As at-Thaqafi narrated that the Messenger of Allah said to him: ‘Lead your people in prayer.’ I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, I sense something disturbing inside of me.’ He asked me to step closer and to sit down in front of him. He placed his hand on my chest between my nipples and asked me to turn around, after which he placed his hand on my back. Then he said: ‘Lead your people in the prayer. The one who leads people in prayer should keep it brief, as there are elderly, sick, weak, and people who have errands to attend to. But if you are praying alone, then pray as you like.’” (Muslim)

عَنْ سَعِيدِ الْجُرَيْرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي، الْعَلَاءِ أَنَّ عُثْمَانَ بْنَ أَبِي الْعَاصِ، أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ خَالَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ صَلَاتِي وَقِرَاءَتِي يَلْبِسُهَا عَلَيَّ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاكَ شَيْطَانٌ يُقَالُ لَهُ خَنْزَبٌ فَإِذَا أَحْسَسْتَهُ فَتَعَوَّذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنْهُ وَانْفِلْ عَلَى يَسَارِكَ ثَلَاثًا قَالَ فَقَعَلْتُ ذَلِكَ فَأَذْهَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَنِّي

“‘Uthman Bin Abu al-’As narrated that he came to the Messenger of Allah and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, Satan comes between my prayer and recitation of the Qur’an and me, so that I get confused.’ The Messenger of Allah said: ‘This satan is called Khinzib, and if you sense his influence, then seek refuge in Allah from him, and spit thrice to your left.’ I did accordingly, and Allah freed me from him.” (Muslim)

In these two authentic narrations found in *Sahih Muslim*, there is no association to possession nor exorcism.

Narration 6:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَجْرِي مِنَ الْإِنْسَانِ مَجْرَى الدَّمِّ

“Verily, Satan flows in man, as the blood flows.” (Muslim)

Narration 6 isn't weak, but it has already been discussed; it's about suspicion and not about Satan actually running around in one's blood. But, even if one were to misunderstand it and take it literally and think, that Satan actually runs around in one's blood, then it doesn't prove that Satan can possess one's body.

In addition to there isn't any authentic text proving the idea of Jinn-possession, then the idea should be rejected due to verses of the Qur'an. Allah ﷻ informed Iblees that he has no authority over His slaves:

﴿إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلًا﴾

“Surely (as for) My servants, you have no authority over them; and your Lord is sufficient as a Protector. (17:65)

﴿إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ﴾

“Surely, (as for) My servants, you have no authority over them except those who follow you of the deviators. (15:42)

Some Muslims interpret these two verses as meaning that Satan is unable to possess true believers; however, Satan is able to possess people of weak faith, which is why they stigmatize people who think they are possessed. The line of thought is that weakness in faith is caused by oneself which is why it's also caused by oneself that one is possessed.

But, the kind of authority in question is related to whether or not the person voluntarily obeys Satan, not to Satan possessing the person – not in the case of true believers or others. This is evident from the following verse where Allah ﷻ informs us about what Satan shall say on the Day of Judgement:

﴿وقال الشيطان لما قضي الامر ان الله وعدكم وعد الحق ووعدتكم فأخلفتكم وما كان لي عليكم من سلطان الا ان دعوتكم فاستجبتم لي فلا تلوموني ولوموا انفسكم ما انا بمصرخكم ولا انتم بمصرخي اني كفرت بما اشركتموني من قبل ان الظالمين لهم عذاب اليم﴾

“And Satan shall say after the affair is decided: ‘Surely, Allah promised you the promise of truth, and I gave you promises, then failed to keep them to you, and I had no authority over you, except that I called you, and you obeyed me, therefore do not blame me but blame yourselves: I cannot be your aider (now) nor can you be my aiders.’” (14:22)

Some interpreters of the Qur’an said that سلطان, i.e., *authority* in this context is برهان, i.e., *proof*, rendering their understanding of the verse *I didn’t have any proof to convince you with, I merely called you, and you obeyed me*. But, even if one would understand the verse in this manner, then the statement *so don’t blame me, but blame yourselves*, rules out that Satan should have any physical power over us, since rhetorically speaking, it wouldn’t make sense that he had physical power over people, and yet blamed people for their obedience towards him out of fear of being possessed or harmed. It wouldn’t make sense to blame people in that case.

So, not only there isn’t any proof for the idea of Jinn-possession, which is sufficient reason for rejecting the idea, but there are verses against the idea which is why one should reject it as pre-Islamic superstition.

The idea about the existence of Jinn pre-dates Islam, and accordingly also pre-dates the research on various mental disorders which is why in many cases people in the pre-Islamic era associated mental disorders with Jinn-possession. In the following, we shall take a closer look at the relationship between Jinn and mental disorders.

Jinn & mental disorders

In some linguistic circles, it is argued that the word for crazy in Arabic, مجنون (maJNuN), is derived from *being possessed by Jinn*, which is why it is derived from the same root as JiNN, which according to them, indicates that the Arabs in the pre-Islamic era thought that insanity was caused by the Jinn or a result of being possessed. In other parts of the

world, insanity was associated with what was equivalent to Jinn in their cultures; spirits. In the following, the words Jinn and spirits will be used interchangeably since the myths concerning them are due to the same kind of experiences.

Sleep paralysis has also given rise to a lot of myths about Jinn-possession, or in other parts of the world spirit-possession. Sleep paralysis isn't categorized as a mental disorder, but we'll include it anyway since the phenomenon has been gravely misunderstood throughout the ages and has given rise to superstition.

Epilepsy was also explained by Jinn-possession, as they didn't really undertake research on the phenomenon.

Likewise, psychosis and schizophrenia have also been associated with Jinn-possession throughout the ages.

In the following, we shall examine the three categories of disorders.

Sleep paralysis

Sleep paralysis is characterized by:

- The body and the mind go out of synchronization, so the brain is a bit awake while the body is paralyzed.
- A feeling of something heavy sitting on one's chest or trying to choke you.
- A feeling of not being alone in the room.
- Hallucinations and delusions.

Due to the symptoms, this phenomenon has led many civilizations to, wrongfully, confirm the beliefs about an interaction between man and Jinn or demons.

In brief, what happens is that while in REM-sleep the mind can produce dreams, and the body is paralyzed so that we don't react to the dreams. Sleep paralysis occurs when the brain is still in REM-sleep, but the body is paralyzed. In this half-awake state, dreams seem incredibly real in the guise of hallucinations about a presence which is sometimes

visible and other times only sensed, and the paralyzing effect is experienced as suffocating and as if something was sitting on your chest, some might even feel a stranglehold on the neck, as if someone was strangling them.

James Allan Cheyne in the article titled *Sleep paralysis and the structure of Waking-Nightmare Hallucinations* from 2003 renders how different people have described their experiences with sleep paralysis. The episodes are experienced very differently and can entail a feeling of a threatening, evil presence, squeaking sounds, an unidentified voice, demonic gibberish, visual hallucinations about people, animals, or supernatural beings. Sometimes they are interpreted as entities creeping into the bed to the patient or on the chest of the patient. The patient might feel like being strangled, experience pain, or being pressured. Sometimes, there can be a feeling of floating over the bed, flying, or being thrown into a spiral tunnel. Some experience intense out-of-the-body experiences (also known as exomatic or transpersonal experiences). Some patients describe experiencing their hallucinations include an uninvited intruder who enters the room, creeps into their bed, throws them around or turns them over, lays on them, and conducts vaginal or anal intercourse with them. Patients often mention that before having knowledge about sleep paralysis, they had a suspicion they were suffering from psychiatric or neurological disorders, demon-possession, or abduction by aliens.

Initially, the principle of causality makes the patient conclude that something must be sitting on top of him, hence the weight on his chest. If this is combined with the feeling that there is a presence and, for instance, a hallucination making one believe one is seeing something, then it's understandable that the patient believes, something is actually there.

In a European context, sleep paralysis was, in the past, explained by demons sitting on top of you. The word nightmare is derived from a mare (a demon) which rides on top of you as illustrated by, for instance, John Henry Fuseli in his painting called *The Nightmare*, a reference to the Night Mare who is sitting on top of the woman and riding her. The horse in the painting is there to give an association with the word *mare*.

In the past, the hallucinations of sexual nature gave rise to myths and superstition in Europe about demons sexually harassing people and even raping them at night. They were termed *incubus* and *succubus*, depending on the demon, people hallucinated about, was male or female. Likewise, in the Muslim part of the world, there were reports about people being sexually harassed or raped by what they assumed were Jinn.

The incubus phenomenon along with a superstitious attribution to spirits has been exploited throughout history; there were cases of rape which were blamed on spirits. Carl Sagan described in the book *The Demon-Haunted World* from 1996, how nuns had incubus-experiences in which the creature who raped them, peculiarly enough, looked just like the Confessor (the priest who receives confessions) or the Bishop:

“Demons, the ‘powers of the air,’ come down from the skies and have unlawful sexual congress with women. Augustine believed that witches were the offspring of these forbidden unions. In the Middle Ages, as in classical antiquity, nearly everyone believed such stories. The demons were also called devils or fallen angels. The demonic seducers of women were labelled incubi; of men, succubi. There are cases in which nuns reported, in some befuddlement, a striking resemblance between the incubus and the priest-confessor, or the bishop, and awoke the next morning, as one fifteenth-century chronicler put it, to ‘find themselves polluted just as if they had commingled with a man.’ There are similar accounts, but in harems not convents, in ancient China. So many women reported incubi, argued the Presbyterian religious writer Richard Baxter (in his *Certainty of the World of Spirits*, 1691), ‘that ‘tis impudence to deny it.’

As they seduced, the incubi and succubi were perceived as a weight bearing down on the chest of the dreamer. *Mare*, despite its Latin meaning, is the Old English word for incubus, and nightmare meant originally the demon that sits on the chests of sleepers, tormenting them with dreams.” – End of quote.

So, throughout history some of the blame for crimes has been placed on spirits and Jinn, thus exploiting superstition to cover up one's own crimes.

Baland Jalal describes in the article *How to Make the Ghosts in my Bedroom Disappear? Focused-Attention Meditation combined with Muscle Relaxation (MR Therapy)* from 2016 that patients explain experiencing that it helps to relax in the muscles when experiencing sleep paralysis. Likewise, prayer, meditation, and religious recitation also help, patients report.

J. D. Blom and H. Eker, in the article *The incubus phenomenon: A sleep-related condition, not to be confused with psychosis* from 2015, draw attention to that sleep paralysis should not be confused with psychosis, and that approximately 30% of a population experiences sleep paralysis once in their lifetime. B. Jalal, C. T. Taylor & D. E. Hinton cast doubt about the percentage, as their conclusion from their literature study is, that the reported percentage varies; from 6% to somewhere between 18 and 40% in the article *A comparison of Self-Report and Interview Methods for Assessing Sleep Paralysis: Pilot Investigations in Denmark and the United States* from 2014.

We conducted a brief interview with a patient who experiences sleep paralysis. The respondent is 23 years old, Muslim, studies at the university, and with roots in ex-Yugoslavia. The crucial part of the interview follows:

Question: *Can you explain, how this issue with sleep paralysis began?*

Answer: It began spontaneously in high school, the first or second year. I hadn't experienced it before, and then one night I experienced sleep paralysis for the first (without any prelude), and I've been experiencing it ever since. There weren't any exceptional circumstances in that period such as workload, exam stress, family crisis or the like. Actually, pretty random that I experienced it that particular night.

Question: Ok, but what did you experience that night?

Answer: I woke up during the night (woke = was conscious, didn't open my eyes or anything), and I couldn't move.

Even though my eyes were closed, I had a feeling of how the room looked like. I could see my room, just as seeing it in a dream, but I was lying down utterly conscious in my bed.

So, it was a weird combination of having my eyes closed and to “dream-see” what I would have been able to see anyways if I opened my eyes.

The windows were open, and I could feel the wind. I have this feeling of an evil “force” floating in the room. I don’t remember if I saw something (with my eyes closed), but I sensed something shaped like an orb.

It was floating in through the windows and approaching me. When it was floating above the bed, I could feel its weight, and the mattress slightly budged due to its weight.

Then this orb of evil force fell down on me and into my chest. I sensed the discomfort physically (as opposed to in a dream, where one doesn’t feel anything).

I begin to recite the Qur’an and feel this orb floating out again, and then I stop the recitation. Then it falls down again and into my chest, and I begin to recite again to get it out.

I stop the recitation, and it enters the chest again. The third time, I keep reciting, and when the orb is out again, I can “feel,” it’s angry. Almost like some sort of ‘inter-connection’ where I can feel inside of me, what it feels.

I keep reciting until the orb is sent out of the window at high speed, and then I can’t feel the presence anymore, and then I wake up.

I’m pretty sure it was the first year of high school, so it was approximately seven years ago. But I still remember the experience very clearly.

Question: What did you think during the experience and the next day, when you woke up?

Answer: During the experience, I was terrified due to not being able to move, but once I sensed the evil force, I didn’t think about it.

Then I was focused entirely on wondering what this thing was. I didn't really put forth possibilities, I was just waiting for it to reveal itself, while I sensed its presence in the room.

When I felt the mattress being pushed down due to the weight of the orb, a shockwave went through my body, because now I was confident, that it wasn't my imagination or a dream, as there was a physical effect.

I was scared, because even if I was imagining this, I was confident, that there was actually something physically in the room.

But, when I began to recite, I was actually quite calm, and when I woke up, I was surprisingly calm. I was in a bit of shock when I woke up, but it didn't stop me from closing the window and going back to sleep without giving it any thought.

The next day, I wondered what it might have been, and I actually thought along the lines of Jinn. Personally, I'm against including Jinn as an explanation, unless everything else is ruled out, so the ideas about Jinn as an explanation were merely a loose thought, for instance, could it be Jinn? But, this was an attempt of making sense of the experience.

I put forth different rational explanations and made some homemade theories about sleep, dreaming, etc. but, since I couldn't conclude anything, I just threw all those ideas away – I remembered the experience, but I had to acknowledge, that I couldn't explain it, so I decided not to think about it anymore.

Question: How long is the duration of these experiences typically? Have they improved or worsened with time? How often do you have these experiences?

Answer: I don't know, what the duration is in real time, I just know how they feel.

They typically feel like 1-2 minutes. It doesn't sound as much, but when you can't move and (often) see weird things, it feels like an incredibly long time.

My impression is, that the duration, in reality, is as long as it feels, since I am conscious, which is why it's not quite like a dream, which can feel like very long, but is dreamt in a few seconds.

Once, I experienced that a brother witnessed the sleep paralysis, while he knew I was paralyzed – others have witnessed it before, but they didn't know, that I experienced these things, but the brother knew it so he could figure out, what was going on.

When he gave me a recap of what I did "in my sleep," for instance, how I turned, my heavy breathing, etc. it was precisely in the same chronological order, I experienced it. It's based on this and other observations that I've deduced that the experienced time and the real-time fit together.

With time, the experiences worsened. I had an "introduction phase" with the experiences becoming more and more violent, for instance, I hallucinated more clear things. It wasn't merely a feeling of the presence of an evil "force" now it became a shadow and later on an apparent "demon." It wasn't just a mere presence any longer but now also touch, and later on, the experiences became more violent with for instance biting in the neck, burns, strangulation, and the like of such.

But, later on (after approximately 3 months of periodic really violent paralysis) it became a lot better. Suddenly, I only experienced being paralyzed with no or very mild delusions without any violence.

It varies a lot how often they occur, as it's periodic. In some periods, I have these experiences almost every night, while in other periods a few times a month. For the last year the gap between their occurrences has widened, and today I haven't had such experiences for at least three months.

Question: *Besides these experiences, in your daily life, are you anxious or do you have experiences with spontaneous anxiety?*

Answer: I've carefully examined the periods where the sleep paralyzes increase, and nothing whatsoever suggests that they are influenced by circumstances.

I can experience an increase even during the most relaxed and calm circumstances, for instance, if I'm traveling after an exam period where everything went well, and there is plenty of time until the next school year. Conversely, I can experience that in stressed periods, the paralysis decreases.

So, the increasement and decreasement seem to be random.

I don't experience any kind of anxiety in my everyday life.

Question: *What are your thoughts today about what causes sleep paralysis in your case? You mentioned that you've considered the possibility, that it could be Jinn-related, is this still part of your considerations?*

Answer: I go back and forth between rational explanations and Jinn. All the arguments, I've got for it being Jinn-related can be explained rationally.

For instance, Jinn (shayateen) are shackled in Ramadan – and “coincidentally” I never experience sleep paralysis in Ramadan, but I might experience it at Eid when they are released.

However, if it's a psychological phenomenon, it might be the subconsciousness which influences it, somewhat like a placebo. Because if you are convinced, it can't occur this month, then it won't.

But on the other hand, placebo requires a pretty firm conviction, and in my case, I'm just playing with the thought. I've even tried experimenting with it: *Let me see if something happens.*

I go back and forth like that. I've had a lot of weird episodes, for instance, one time, I saw that I was bitten in the neck by a demon who wanted to suck my blood, and when I woke up, there was actually blood on the pillow. But this too can be explained rationally, for instance, if I bled (nosebleeding, wounds which open up, something) it could influence what I saw in my paralysis.

One of the experiences that I fail to explain rationally is when a demon-shaped being tried to strangle me. I wanted to remove its hands, but

something scorching touched my arms and held them down as chains until I recited my way out of it.

When I woke up, I actually had minor burn marks on my wrists without having a clue as to where they came from. I was staying at my parents' house that night, so even if I had been sleepwalking, someone should have noticed it, if I sat and burned my wrists, etc.

So, I don't rule out the possibility that it could be Jinn-related; however, I don't conclude anything.

I try to be practical about it: I know that *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah) and recitation helps. If it's due to giving me peace which removes the paralysis or due to Jinn, which are driven away, I don't know – and as long as it works, I don't really care to know." – End of interview.

The answers in the interview are in line with the research literature related to the issue. The new insight due to these answers is how the insecurity and uncertainty about the cause of sleep paralysis gives rise to our respondent doesn't completely rule out or reject that the cause might be Jinn – in spite of lack of arguments and in spite of the respondent is perfectly able to bring forth rational explanations for the experiences. This indicates, much like mentioned by the research literature, that it can be difficult to detach oneself from cultural influence on the frameworks of understanding which might contribute to explaining why superstitious ideas are so hard to get rid of.

The only thing the respondent couldn't find a rational explanation to was waking up with burn marks on the wrists. It is, however, not unseen before, and it has a perfectly natural explanation without any need for a supernatural explanation. Intuitively, one would associate burn marks with fire or heat, some might forget that heat can be produced by friction, for instance, by rubbing something against something else.

There has been undertaken studies of the phenomenon *self-inflicted injuries during sleep*. Agargun, Besiroglu, Gulec, Aydin & Selvi wrote an article with the title *Sleep-Related Violence, Self-Mutilation, and Dissociative*

Experiences in 2016. In this article they provide a good overview of the research literature on the topic of *Violent Behavior during Sleep (VBS)*:

VBS includes self-mutilating behavior (self-harm and self-destruction), sexual assault, murder attempt, murder, and suicide during sleep directed towards things, people, or oneself. In 1997 a study concluded that approximately 2% of a general population suffers from it.

Night terror (also known as sleep terror and night fear), insomnia, to talk in one's sleep, bruxism (excessive teeth grinding), and hypnic jerk occurs more often amongst people with violent or harmful behavior during sleep than amongst people with hypnagogic hallucinations.

There are several neurological and psychological reasons for VBS; 7 disorders can cause it: Sleepwalking, night terror, REM sleep disorders, nocturnal psychological dissociative disorders, seizures at night, obstructive sleep apnea, and periodic limb movement disorder (rhythmic movement in limbs during sleep).

A connection has been proven between nocturnal dissociative episodes (including VBS) and other parasomnias such as night terror and sleepwalking.

Self-mutilating behavior, such as cutting one's genitals, self-inflicted burning, and striking through windows, is common amongst patients with nocturnal dissociative episodes.

In 1989 Schenck, Milner, Hurwitz, Bundlie & Mahowald examined, which kind of injuries 100 patients inflicted themselves during sleep. The results were published in an article titled *A polysomnographic and clinical report on sleep-related injury in 100 adult patients*. Amongst the 100 patients, 54 suffered from night terror, 36 from REM sleep behavioral disorders, 7 from dissociative disorders, 2 from seizures at night, and 1 from sleep apnea. Amongst the 100 patients, 95 woke up with bruises, 30 with scratches, and 9 with bone fractures.

Therefore, there isn't anything mysterious about the injuries reported by the respondent, even the burn marks can be caused by simply rubbing intensively with the hands or arms during sleep.

Jinn-possession and epilepsy

Throughout history, various civilizations believed that epilepsy is caused by spirit-possession. In the pre-Islamic era, the Arabs believed that epilepsy was caused by Jinn-possession, and amongst Christians the explanation was demon-possession.

In 2012 Obeid, Abulaban, al-Ghatani, al-Maliki & al-Ghamdi undertook an examination described in the article titled *Possession by 'Jinn' as a cause of epilepsy (saraa): A study from Saudi Arabia*, in which they concluded that the idea of Jinn-possession as an explanation of epilepsy is dominating in Saudi Arabia despite the idea having a cultural origin and not a religious one. Additionally, they wrote that this widespread misunderstanding contributes to a negative view towards epilepsy, which is why something needs to be done to remove this misunderstanding.

The study was undertaken by handing out a questionnaire to university graduated school teachers and bachelor students. There were 398 participants of which most of them had witnessed epileptic seizures. 172 (43,1%) believed that epilepsy is a psychiatric disorder. 62 (40,3%) of the school teachers and 123 (50,4%) of the students believed that epilepsy is caused by possession. The majority of the participants believed there is a medical cure for epilepsy, despite a significant amount of them believed that faith healers can heal epilepsy using faith and traditional medicine.

The researchers explained that the idea of epilepsy being caused by spirit-possession originates from Babylon and goes back to approximately the year 4000 BC. and that it's a persistent myth.

It's interesting to note, that the idea is dominating despite the fact, that there aren't authentic texts connecting epilepsy with Jinn-possession. So, this pre-Islamic idea somehow crept into the culture.

Ibn Hajar tried to argue for epilepsy in some cases being caused by Satan and in other cases being a mere disease in *Fath ul-Bari* by using the following narrations:

Narration 1: There is a narration about a woman who suffers from epilepsy, so she comes to the Prophet ﷺ and asks him to pray for her to be cured:

حَدَّثَنِي عَطَاءُ بْنُ أَبِي رَاحٍ، قَالَ قَالَ لِي ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ أَلَا أُرِيكَ امْرَأَةً مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ قُلْتُ بَلَى قَالَ هَذِهِ الْمَرْأَةُ السَّوْدَاءُ أَتَتْ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَتْ إِنِّي أُصْرَعُ، وَإِنِّي أَتَكَشَّفُ فَادْعُ اللَّهَ لِي قَالَ إِنْ شِئْتَ صَبِرْتُ وَلَكَ الْجَنَّةُ وَإِنْ شِئْتَ دَعَوْتُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُعَافِيَكَ فَقَالَتْ أَصْبِرُ فَقَالَتْ إِنِّي أَتَكَشَّفُ فَادْعُ اللَّهَ أَنْ لَا أَتَكَشَّفَ، فَدَعَا لَهَا

“Ata Bin Abi Rabah narrated: ‘Ibn ‘Abbas said to me: ‘Shall I show you a woman of the people of Paradise?’ I said: ‘Yes.’ He said: ‘This black lady came to the Prophet and said: ‘I get attacks of epilepsy and my body becomes uncovered; please invoke Allah for me.’ The Prophet said to her: ‘If you wish, be patient and you will have (enter) Paradise; and if you wish, I will invoke Allah to cure you.’ She said: ‘I will remain patient’ and added ‘but I become uncovered, so please invoke Allah for me, that I may not become uncovered.’ So, he invoked Allah for her.” (al-Bukhari & Muslim)

However, nothing in this narration connects epilepsy with Jinn-possession.

Narration 2: There is another variant of this narration in *al-Bahr az-Zikhar* by *al-Bazzar*, mentioned by Ibn Hajar:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مَرْزُوقٍ، قَالَ: نَا مُسْلِمُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، قَالَ: نَا صَدَقَةُ، يَعْنِي: ابْنُ مُوسَى، قَالَ: نَا فَرْقَدٌ، يَعْنِي: السَّبْعِيُّ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا، قَالَ: كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِمَكَّةَ، فَجَاءَتْهُ امْرَأَةٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ، فَقَالَتْ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ هَذَا الْخَبِيثَ قَدْ غَلَبَنِي، فَقَالَ لَهَا: إِنْ تَصْبِرِي عَلَيَّ مَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِ تَجِئِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ ذُنُوبٌ وَلَا حِسَابٌ، قَالَتْ: وَالَّذِي بَعَثَكَ بِالْحَقِّ، لَأُصْبِرَنَّ حَتَّى أَلْقَى اللَّهَ، قَالَتْ: إِنِّي أَخَافُ الْخَبِيثَ أَنْ يُجَرِّدَنِي، فَدَعَا لَهَا، فَكَانَتْ إِذَا خَشِيتُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهَا نَأْيِي أَسْتَارَ الْكُعْبَةَ فَتَعْلُقُ بِهَا، فَتَقُولُ لَهُ: احْسَأْ، فَيَذْهَبُ عَنْهَا

“The Prophet ﷺ was in Mecca, and a woman came to him and said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, this filth causes me to become exposed.’ He replied: ‘Be patient with, then you shall not have any sins or accounting on the Day of Judgement.’ She replied: ‘By the One, Who sent you with

the truth, I shall remain patient until I meet Allah.’ She added: ‘I fear to be exposed by this filth.’ He prayed for her. Whenever she feared a seizure, she would go to the Ka’ba and hold onto one of its walls and say: ‘Go away.’ And the seizure didn’t occur.” (al-Bazzar)

Chain of narration: Muhammad Bin Marzuk – Muslim Bin Ibrahim – Sadaqah – Farda – Sa’id Bin Jubair – Ibn ‘Abbas

The word *al-khabeeth* الخبيث can carry numerous meanings, but points towards something foul or evil. It can be used as a reference to Satan, as Satan is evil and foul, but it can’t be argued that every reference to something evil or foul is a reference to Satan. In reality, it’s obvious that *al-khabeeth* in this context is a reference to epilepsy.

Furthermore, it’s worth noticing that al-Bazzar himself writes about this narration:

وَهَذَا الْحَدِيثُ لَا نَعْلَمُهُ يُرَوَّى بِهَذَا اللَّفْظِ إِلَّا مِنْ هَذَا الْوَجْهِ بِهَذَا الْإِسْنَادِ ، وَصَدَقَهُ لَيْسَ بِهِ نَاسٌ ، وَفَرَّقَدَ قَدْ حَدَّثَ عَنْهُ جَمَاعَةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ ، مِنْهُمْ: شُعْبَةُ وَغَيْرُهُ ، وَاحْتَمَلُوا حَدِيثَهُ عَلَى سُوءِ حِفْظٍ فِيهِ

“We don’t know of any other narrators of this narration with this wording and this chain of narration. And there isn’t anything with Sadaqah (one is required to examine his narrations), whereas a group of scholars narrated from Farqad; amongst them is Shu’bah and others who tolerated his narrations despite his bad memory.”

According to *Tabaqat al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa’d, vol 7 Farqad is weak, and his narrations are rejected كان ضعيفا منكر الحديث. He also mentions that Ayyub said about Farqad that he isn’t a narrator of *hadith* ليس بصاحب حديث.

Imam Muslim mentioned in the introduction to his *Sabih* that it was said about Farqad that he isn’t a narrator of *hadith*:

حَدَّثَنِي أَحْمَدُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ زَيْدٍ، قَالَ ذَكَرَ فَرَّقَدٌ عِنْدَ أَيُّوبَ فَقَالَ إِنَّ فَرَّقَدًا لَيْسَ صَاحِبَ حَدِيثٍ

“Farqad was mentioned in front of Ayyub, and he said: ‘Farqad isn’t a narrator.’” (Muslim)

Farqad is categorized as weak and had a bad memory which is sufficient reason for rejecting the narration. If someone would accept his narration anyways, then they have to understand it as mentioned before; *al-kebeeth* being a reference to epilepsy.

Narration 3: Ibn Hajar mentions the following narration:

ذكر حجاج وغيره عن ابن جريج ، عن الحسن بن مسلم أنه أخبره أنه سمع طلوساً يقول: كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم يؤتى بالمجانين فيضرب صدر أحدهم فيبرأ ، فأتي بمجنونة يقال لها: أم زفر ، فضرب صدرها فلم تبرأ

“Al-Hasan Bin Muslim narrated that Tawus said: ‘Possessed people used to come to the Prophet ﷺ, and he would beat them in the chest, thus healing them. Then came a possessed woman who was called Umm Zafar, and he beat her in the chest, but she wasn’t healed.’”

This narration doesn’t have a chain of narration leading back to the Prophet ﷺ and should thus be rejected as a myth. Likewise, there is a narration narrated by Hanzalah also with a chain of narration leading back to Tawus with an addition, but it should be rejected on the same ground.

Thus, there isn’t any authentic, Islamic text connecting epilepsy to Jinn.

Psychosis, schizophrenia & Jinn-possession

In various cultures even today, some people believe that numerous disorders related to psychopathology are caused by spirit-possession which is exploited by exorcists to control people or promote the agenda of individuals or groups.

The following are some of the numerous studies undertaken about the idea of spirit- and Jinn-possession in the context of psychological disorders.

Scientific studies about Jinn- and spirit-possession related to psychological disorders

Stuart Vyse describes in the book *Believing in magic* that in the case of actual psychosis people suffer from hallucinations and delusions which indicates a serious breach in their relationship with reality. The most prominent kind of psychosis can be found in the case of schizophrenia which entails delusions, hallucinations, and incoherent speech. The delusions in the case of schizophrenia can, for instance, be the belief that one is some historical figure (grandiose), one believes one's thoughts are being controlled by external forces (a lack of control), or that someone is out to get you (paranoia).

Graham C. L. Davey wrote an article '*Spirit Possession' and Mental Health* for psychologytoday.com, in which he mentions a study undertaken by Neuner, Pfeiffer, Schauer-Kaiser, Odenwald and others in 2012 which examined the notion of *cen*, a local variant of spirit-possession, amongst young people between 12 and 25 years old in war-afflicted regions in Northern Uganda. They compared the belief amongst young people who had been kidnapped and forced to fight as child-soldiers for the group *Lord's Resistance Army* with the belief amongst young people who hadn't been kidnapped. (*Cen* is explained as a kind of spirit-possession where a deceased person's ghost visits you and replaces your identity).

According to the study, spirit-possession occurs significantly more often amongst abducted child-soldiers than amongst those who haven't been abducted. The study also revealed that the narrations about spirit-possession were related to exposure to trauma such as sexual assault, being forced into killing, psychological disorders, higher suicide rates, and PTSD.

Neuner et al. Conclude that in many parts of the world where the idea of spirit-possession is common, the idea is typically a result of psychological trauma and can be a way explaining the dissociative symptoms which usually are accompanied to intense traumatic experiences. The ideas about spirit-possession can in this regard be exploited by various local actors to manipulate the behavior of individuals – to the extent they can force them to perform extremely brutal actions. Explanations to mental problems have varied

throughout history, and it's a kind of explanation which has led to a lot of people who suffered from invalidating psychological problems have been persecuted and physically abused instead of receiving the proper support and treatment which they require. Various ancient civilizations such as Egypt, China, Babylon, and Greece believed that people who showed symptoms of psychopathology were possessed by evil spirits, and the only way to cast out these evil spirits was through long, ritualized ceremonies which often entailed psychical attacks on the afflicted in an attempt to force the demon out such as torture, whipping, or starvation. Not surprisingly, these kinds of treatments quite often lead to the patient suffering and the condition of the patient worsening.

Graham explains that demonic possession or spirit-possession still is a common explanation to mental disorders in some lesser developed areas in the world, especially where magic and voodoo still plays an important role in the local culture, for instance in Haiti and some areas in West-Africa, as reported in the article covering three studies with the title *Religious beliefs, possession States, and spirits: three case studies from sri lanka* undertaken by Hanwella, de Silva, Yoosuf, Karunaratne & de Silva in 2012. The reason for clinging on to the idea of spirit-possession as an explanation to mental disorders is often connected to the local religious ideas and are often tried treated with exorcism – even in the case of individuals who are known to have a diagnose of psychotic symptoms according to a study described in the article titled *Practicing Exorcism in Schizophrenia* from 2011 by Tajima-Pozo, Zambrano-Enriquez, de Anta, Moron, Carrasco, Lopez-Ibor & Diaz-Marsá.

Barbara Zebb and Michael C. Moore concluded based on a study of high school student described in the article *Superstitiousness and Perceived Anxiety Control as Predictors of Psychological Distress* from 2003 that superstition amongst the students was connected to psychological imbalance such as anxiety, depression, or the feeling of a lack of control, especially for women.

In an article from 2014 with the title *Supernatural 'Jinn' Seen as Cause of Mental Illness Among Muslims* written for LiveScience Bahar Gholipour described a number of studies about the belief in Jinn with regards to psychological disorders and what can be concluded from the studies.

Initially, Gholipour explains that people in Muslim societies traditionally have regarded Jinn as the cause of mental and neurological disorders, especially epilepsy.

In a study from 2014 described in an article by Lim, Hoek & Blom titled *the attribution of psychotic symptoms to jinn in Islamic patients* undertaken in the Netherlands Dr. Jan Dirk Blom an assisting professor in psychiatry at the University of Groningen said that culture can influence how people perceive their psychotic symptoms, and this study explains how westerners might become better at understanding patients with an Islamic background. Other researchers who participated in the study concluded that it can be normal for Muslim Psychiatric patients to attribute their symptoms to Jinn such as back pain, anxiety, depression, mood swings, delusions, and gynecological and sexual problems which are believed to be due to the touch of Satan.

The researchers undertook a literature study of the scientific literature that explains how Muslim psychiatric patients explain their symptoms. The study included 105 articles about Jinn and their relationship to mental disorders including 47 case reports. 66% of the reports were about patients with schizophrenia or a related disorder, while the rest of them suffered from a bipolar disorder, epilepsy, or OCD.

Based on their literature study, they wrote that the attribution of psychiatric symptoms to Jinn is common amongst some Muslim populations. And since patients with such background typically consult imams, they recommend cooperation between the health service and religious practitioners. One of the researchers explained: *In our practice in Haag, we have an imam affiliated to our psychiatric hospital who is available for consultation and advice.*

Two studies in the UK in 2011 and 2012 revealed that a lot of Muslims completely believe in the existence of Jinn, magic, and the Evil Eye and that the belief in these ideas can keep people from seeking professional medical treatment.

The Dutch study showed that people with schizophrenia can experience various delusions depending on their culture. In the US people with schizophrenia typically have delusions related to

technology and surveillance, whereas, in Japan, where people are more honor-oriented, patients more often have delusions entailing fear of public humiliation.

Dr. Blom explains that there can be other factors besides the culture; for instance, a Muslim patient had searched the internet and found others with similar symptoms to his own which lead him to conclude that he was a werewolf.

Amna Shah and Jessica Carlsson wrote an article in 2016 titled *Jinn-besættelse som forklaring på psykiske sygdom har betydning for behandlingssøgende adfærd* (trans. *Jinn-possession as explanation to psychological disorders influences treatment-seeking behavior*) in which they examined whether or not using Jinn as an explanation for psychological disorders influences treatment-seeking behavior. They mentioned a study undertaken in Pakistan where with 139 participants of which 61% had a diagnosis, but only 8% were referred to seek the required professional help, while the rest received treatment by religious healers. Furthermore, they pointed out that due to this a lot of Muslim patients are at risk of continuing to live for a long time with undiagnosed psychiatric or somatic disorders.

Anastasia Lim, Hans W. Hoek, Samrad Ghane, Mathijs Deen & Jan Dirk Blom in 2018 undertook a study of the causal explanations of Muslim psychiatric patients to their disorders to examine how widespread the belief in Jinn as a causal explanation is. The study is described in an article titled *The Attribution of Mental Health Problems to Jinn: An Explorative Study in a Transcultural Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic*. They concluded that there are surprisingly many who share this belief and that this belief undermines the need to research in diseases. There were 47 Muslim participants of which 38 i.e. 80,9% believed in the Evil Eye, 30 i.e. 63,8% believed in magic, 27 i.e. 57% claimed that they've had been in direct contact with Jinn, 21 i.e. 44,7% confirmed that they believed that their psychiatric symptoms were caused by metaphysical beings, while 15 i.e. 32% were in doubt but had, however, considered the possibility. In total 118 patients were offered to participate, but 69 rejected. Some of the ones who rejected explained that their rejection was due to fear of repercussions from Jinn, if they spoke about them, while others found it inappropriate to discuss the issue of Jinn with non-Muslims which suggests that the percentage would've been higher

if all 118 had participated. A lot of the participants explained that they've sought help and treatment in the past with religious healers, but after suffering for many years they sought professional, psychiatric help. The researchers suggest two strategies for the treatment of Muslim patients; (1) to challenge the idea of a supernatural cause of their symptoms. (2) to initiate cooperation with religious leaders who can endorse a medical treatment.

Dr. Najat Khalifa, Dr. Tim Hardie & Professor Muhammad S. I. Mullick undertook a study in 2012 comparing the beliefs of Muslims in Dhaka and Leicester. They described their study in an article titled *Jinn and psychiatry: Comparison of beliefs among Muslims in Dhaka and Leicester*. In the introduction to the study, they mention that a former study found that approximately half of the participants believed that Jinn can cause physical and mental health problems. In their study, they found similar results as depicted in Table 3. In the article, they mention that women were more inclined towards choosing religious figures as treaters of diseases caused by Jinn. In the discussion, they comment that the interference of imams and religious figures can delay the actual treatment.

Belief	Leicester N=111, n (%)	Dhaka N=320, n (%)
Jinn-possession.	65 (58)	196 (61)
Jinn can cause mental health problems.	58 (52)	142 (44)
Religious figures should treat diseases caused by Jinn.	71 (64)	178 (56)
Medical doctors should treat diseases caused by Jinn.	26 (23)	105 (33)
Medical doctors and religious figures should treat diseases caused by Jinn.	60 (54)	106 (33)

Table 3: The results adapted from table in the article by Khalifah et al. (2012)

In an article titled *Practical Tips for Working with Muslim Mental Health Clients* Khalid Shah mentions a study undertaken by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1975, which explained that due to unsatisfactory conditions for the treatment of psychological disorders in third world countries, there are more than 40 million untreated,

mentally ill people in these countries. Furthermore, mentally ill people are shunned upon and isolated from the community. Due to stigma psychological disorders in the family are kept a secret, and sometimes the way of treating the disorders are brutal, for instance, patients are put in chains out of fear that they might hurt themselves, and sometimes they are beaten to cast out Jinn.

In 2015, Fahimeh Mianji and Yousef Semnani undertook a study of spirit-possession in North Africa, East Africa, and in some Middle Eastern societies. They described their research in an article titled *Zar Spirit Possession in Iran and African Countries: Group Distress, Culture-Bound Syndrome or Cultural Concept of Distress?* Various cults bind their members together through the belief in possession, and in the cults, they don't perceive it as pathological, but there is a risk it can evolve into psychosis or personal disorders outside the cults. The belief in spirit-possession isn't confined to the Muslims in Africa, and different circles perform a ritual against Zar in various circumstances related to conflicts in marriage, social or gender inequality, or related to social or cultural changes. In some areas in Iran, the wind is associated with possession or harm such as disease, discomfort, and mental illness. They describe that amongst Nubians, this belief is employed as a disclaimer of responsibility excusing wrong behavior with possession. The belief in possession is employed to control the behavior of the cult members; they must adhere to specific injunctions and prohibitions to avoid spirit-possession. Also, one should participate in all ceremonies.

In 2014, Kinson, Poh & Chen wrote an article titled *Possession Trance, Epilepsy, and Primary Psychosis: The Challenges in Diagnosis and Management*. In the article, they described the challenges of distinguishing between possession trance and trance, and also dissociative symptoms and epilepsy. Due to the cultural bias, many cases of possession trance are underdiagnosed and accordingly untreated.

In 2008, Orin Devinsky and George Lai wrote an article titled *Spirituality and Religion in Epilepsy*. The purpose of the study was to examine the religious experiences of people in relation to psychological disorders, especially epilepsy. They included numerous cases with people hallucinating about the voice of God, commanding them to do things. They included a case study about a 45-year-old man who

experienced afebrile seizures due to epilepsy. When he was 27 years old, he woke up one night after a seizure where he had seen Jesus and heard a voice commanding him to kill his wife and himself. He killed his wife by stabbing her multiple times. Then he stabbed himself multiple times and put his house on fire. He was committed to a psychiatric prison after being declared insane. In prison, he explained how he from time to other heard the voice of God. After surgical treatment, he has been without medicine and seizures for ten years and lives a normal life with a job.

In a study undertaken by Schabnam Daber-Taleh, Uwe Walter & Johannes Rösche described in an article from 2017 titled *Knowledge and attitude towards epilepsy among students of economics in Herat, Afghanistan* which covered a questionnaire with 243 participants amongst students of economics one of the findings were that less than 10% of the respondents believed that Jinn-possession was the cause of epilepsy while slightly more than 14% believed that the cause was magic. Slightly more than 33% would send for an imam in the case of an epileptic seizure whereas 61% would also call a doctor. Slightly more than 9% would send for a magician. The researchers concluded that the beliefs of the respondents were a mix of Islamic, shamanistic, and modern ideas.

L. A. Dardas and L. A. Simmons tried to clarify the concept of stigma concerning mental disorders amongst Arab families. They described their study in an article from 2015 titled *The Stigma of mental illness in Arab families: A concept analysis*. They explained that the stigma of mental illness is one of the most common reasons for avoiding seeking treatment, which leads to negative consequences and unnecessary suffering for many people and their families. They described that according to The World Health Organization (WHO), 2,5% of the world population will experience a mental disorder at some point in their lives. Less than 30% of the ones who are diagnosed with a mental disorder seek treatment, and less than 40% complete the treatment. They mention an Australian study that showed that people who report about stigma would find it embarrassing to seek treatment. There is a reference to a study that shows that despite the Islamic injunction of seeking a cure, the stigma functions as a hindrance of doing so. Another study describes that in relation to mental disorders amongst Arab

families 33% initially turn to the family practitioner, then 21,6% turn to family members, then 19% turn to a sheikh, only 11% contact the mental health services. Months and even years may elapse before families accept that the family member needs professional psychiatric treatment. Often, this admittance comes when the symptoms are severe and recognizable by people. As some view mental disorders as a punishment for one's sins or as a consequence of a weak belief, it may be a cause of this stigma. A study included 12 Iraqi, depressed teenagers who, despite knowing that it was crucial to complete the treatment, refrained from completing the treatment due to fear of stigma.

Another study examined 100 family members who were related to someone who had a diagnosis of schizophrenia. The study showed that 86,7% of them reported a hard life, and 72% reported psychological distress and poor life quality due to having such a family member. The fear of stigma can delay the correct diagnosis and accordingly that the patient receives the necessary treatment. The practice *ruqya*, i.e., to recite specific verses from the Qur'an or to ask the patient to drink or wash with water blessed by reciting Koranic verses on it fulfills a cultural purpose, but it doesn't heal the patient of mental disorders, and accordingly, the patient continues to suffer.

Ghaydaa Ahmad Shehata wrote a literature study in 2016 titled *A Review of Epilepsy Stigma in Egypt*. In the study, Ghaydaa mentions that epilepsy is the most widespread, severe, neurological disorder there is. Epilepsy has been known in the ancient, Indian medical science in the Vedic period approximately 4500 – 1500 BC where the references to epilepsy can be traced back to 2000 BC. Epilepsy was back then described as supernatural, demonic, magical, and contagious. Hippocrates presented the notion between 460 – 370 BC that epilepsy merely is a natural disease. However, this wrong perception of epilepsy continued and in 1486 epilepsy was described as something characterizing witches in *Mallus Maleficarum*, a legal handbook on Witch-Hunt, written by two monks authorized by the Pope which lead to the persecution, torture, and killing of more than 200.000 women in the course of 300 years. In Germany in 1934, a law called *Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases* was enforced whose consequence was sterilization and extermination of people with hereditary diseases; epilepsy was classified as a hereditary disease. Due to Eugenics Programs between

1935 and 1975 people with epilepsy were sterilized in Sweden, and until 1956 in some American states, and they weren't allowed to marry in the UK until 1970. In a survey undertaken in Egypt, 189 teachers answered a query that examined their attitude towards students with epilepsy, approximately 46,6% said that students with epilepsy were a source of problems in the class. In another survey answered by 2226 students, only 7,1% of epileptic students and 8,5% of non-epileptic students replied that epilepsy is a brain disease.

In 2015, Pieter F. Craffert an article titled *What does it mean to be possessed by a spirit or a demon? Some phenomenological insights from neuro-anthropological research* in which, he discussed what it means to be possessed. In the article he mentioned an explanation to how one may interpret the exorcisms performed by Jesus with natural explanations; in numerous cases as psychosomatic healing in relation to two kinds of disorders: Hysteria (also known as *conversion disorder*; a subcategory of somatoform disorders according to DSM-IV) and dissociative identity disorders. His explanation implies that the stories of exorcism in The Bible can be explained as misinterpretations of the narrators, as they didn't have the same insights into psychiatry, as we do today which may explain why they mistook the therapy performed by Jesus with exorcism and the somatoform disorders with spirit-possession. Moreover, he explains that Christians in the Renaissance believed that holy men couldn't be possessed; they could merely be besieged. This idea has been revived amongst Christians in the present. He describes two rare dissociative disorders as examples of such disorders functioning as a defense mechanism when the patient can't cope with emotions. He mentions Capgra's syndrome, which entails that the patient can't recognize faces and Cotard's syndrome, which entails that the patient is convinced that he is dead due to a broken connection between sense impressions and emotions.

Furthermore, he describes that exorcism and *adorcism* (a term used by Luc de Heutsch about accepting a positive possession) can function as an extension of therapy that tries to address the cause of the problem. Furthermore, he explains that possession can be an expression of suppression, abuse, or a severe inequality in the power balance which is why the distribution of possessed vs. exorcists in patriarchal societies typically is that the majority of the possessed are women, and the

majority of exorcists are men. In such circumstances, exorcism may function as a controlling element that creates its own victims and maintains them in that role.

In 1999, Gretty M. Mirdal wrote an article titled *Mellem sundhed og sygdom: refleksioner over somatisering*, in which she explains the phenomena *conversion disorder* (hysteria) and neurasthenia:

“Somatization is related to the phenomenon hysteria ... Hysteria is the prototype of psychologically conditioned somatic complaints. The disorder begins with a psychological conflict that is so terrifying that it's suppressed. Because it's suppressed, it can't be processed on a psychological level. The conflict can't be resolved, i.e. to use a stress-theoretical term one is unable to 'cope' with it, to release the significant, psychological tensions. The person achieves a temporary relief when such psychological tensions are converted, transformed into a corporal symptom. The corporal symptoms, typically paralysis or sensory disturbances (for instance, loss of sense of sight or the voice) are not based on an anatomic, neurologic, i.e., objective foundation.”

Plainly speaking, this means that one might have suppressed something psychologically, for instance, stress that appears through physical symptoms such as pain or a temporary loss of senses. She also writes:

“Contrary to conversion hysteria, neurasthenia doesn't entail conversion of the psychological tension. There isn't a suppressed conflict, rather a missing suppression, a weakness, or lack (defect) in the psychological apparatus.”

Plainly speaking, this means that unlike in the case of *conversion disorder* where something psychological is transformed into something physical symptom, then, in this case, there isn't anything psychological that is transformed, rather in this case something is missing that should've been there.

In 1998, Daniels Bruns wrote an article titled *The Problem of Somatization* in which he describes some of the challenges which complicate the correct diagnosis of patients with somatization disorders and accordingly the correct treatment. The first problem is

that psychological disorders are associated with negativity to the extent that even amongst graduate students in a course about abnormal psychology, Bruns experienced that a student used the word pathological as a curse word about another student which also reflects the general attitude in the surrounding society. The same applies to the word *psychosomatic* that originally entails disorders of both physical and psychological components. Now, the words *somatoform* and *somatization* are employed instead. Typically, what happens is that the patient has an underlying feeling of depression or other anxiety-producing feelings, which either aren't recognized or acknowledged by the patient. Instead, the person realizes the physical consequences of these underlying problems. So, in the case of depression, the patient will complain about fatigue, and in the case of anxiety, the patient will complain about shaking hands or tensions in the neck. There is a view on psychological problems that entails viewing them as weakness, which makes it hard for many patients to admit that they have such a problem.

Another problem is the way health insurances work some places in the world where the insurance company, to a greater extent, acknowledges physical diseases and to a lesser extent, somatoform disorders. The consequence is that the patient is attended to by a doctor to uncover medical diseases resulting in the doctor concluding that there isn't a medical problem with the patient instead of referring the patient to the mental health services. This is frustrating for everyone involved; the doctor is unable to provide a diagnosis, the patient doesn't receive the necessary treatment, and the insurance company has to pay for a useless treatment.

A simple solution could be to refer the patient to a psychologist or a psychiatrist, but patients suffering from somatoform disorders tend to view psychological diagnoses as curse words, and they typically consider the mere suggestion that they have a psychological disorder as a mockery. For such patients, psychological disorders indicate a mental or moral weakness which they don't want to be associated with. Accordingly, such patients are seldomly able to acknowledge the role psychological factors play for their condition.

This dilemma has many consequences. However, one of the more severe ones is that treatment with medicine can at best provide only

temporary relief due to the placebo effect, i.e., the patient isn't cured. Still, the patient refuses to accept psychiatric treatment and insists on being treated medically.

Bruns suggests five steps to resolve this issue:

- 1) We should enlighten people about somatoform disorders, as there is a need for patients who for instance, suffer from stress, depression, and anxiety, to understand what possible symptoms can arise from there. Furthermore, patients should be encouraged to not view mental or emotional disorders as shameful or an indication of mental or emotional weakness. The patients should be encouraged to seek the best cure for their disorders.
- 2) Doctors should be educated for them to be able to recognize somatoform disorders. Much too often, patients receive negative diagnoses, for instance, in the case of stress-related chest pains, the patient is sent home while being told that the pain isn't due to a heart attack. Instead, there should be a positive diagnose, for instance, that the pain is due to a panic attack. However, instead, the patients are sent home without receiving treatment for their depressions, anxieties, or other psychological disorders. When the doctor refers the patient to the mental health services, it should be done in a supportive, non-judgemental manner, as the patient most often will perceive the referral as a rejection and a condemnation by the doctor. Therefore, patients might be too embarrassed to tell the doctor about symptoms, which lead to a referral to the mental health services. Doctors should prepare themselves to discuss the connection between body and mind since not everybody understands the complex interaction between them.
- 3) The best way to treat somatoform disorders and somatization is through cooperation between medical and mental health services treaters. Medical doctors can rule out medical diseases, but it's tough for them to identify the psychological dynamics which are present in underlying somatization. Psychologists have developed technology in the guise of psychometric measures which can contribute to confirming somatoform tendencies. However, they are unable to rule out possible

contributing, organic factors to the disorders. Doctors and psychologists should, therefore, have better cooperation.

- 4) The public should be enlightened about the physical consequences which stress and psychological factors can have on the health, as it can contribute to people generally accepting such disorders. If the stigma is removed, then it will become easier for patients to admit which disorders they are suffering from.
- 5) The laws should be changed so that medical and emotional disorders are considered as equals. It's not unseen that insurance policies only cover treatments which include a diagnosis of a physical disease which puts an enormous amount of social pressure on people to medicate against their psychological challenges.

In 2011, Dimsdale, Sharma & Sharpe undertook a study of the attitude of physicians towards somatoform disorders. They described the study in an article titled *What Do Physicians Think of Somatoform Disorders?* The study was undertaken over two rounds, in the first round 19 physicians participated. The majority of the 19 physicians explained that the very term *somatoform* is demeaning, rejecting, and stigmatizing. They reported very different experiences with imagined diseases. Some reported that such patients only constituted less than 1%, whereas others experience that the share was up to 30%. In the second round, 332 physicians participated.

The answers from the 332 physicians showed that there is a real need for making such diagnoses, but the way the classification is undertaken right now is unsatisfying which is why it can be hard for physicians to put worth a diagnosis. Questions were answers about the experiences of the physicians with regards to the attitude of the patients towards diagnoses concerning somatization, hypochondria, conversion, and pain. The physicians reported that in 67% of the cases of somatoform disorders, the patients either didn't like or found that the diagnosis was outright unacceptable, while in case of hypochondria the percentage was 84%, in the case of *conversion* 51%, and in the case of pain 31%. Then the physicians were asked about how useful and how clear the categorization for diagnoses was, 59% reported that they aren't useful and 49% that they aren't clear with regards to somatoform disorders.,

29% and 18% with regards to somatization, and 39% and 34% with regards to *conversion*. The researchers concluded from the study that there is a great amount of unclarity amongst physicians concerning the diagnostics in DSM-5.

What can we conclude from the scientific studies?

We can conclude that people don't always get the help they need and that the superstition about Jinn-possession and spirit-possession keeps the patients in a difficult situation. The misinterpretation of the authority of Satan and ignorance about psychological disorders contribute to the stigmatization of patients. Instead of receiving the help they require, they are looked down upon and labeled as people with a weak belief or a lousy behavior which is why they hesitate with seeking help until their symptoms have worsened to the extent that nobody can ignore them. Furthermore, the superstition about Jinn-possession can be exploited financially and to serving various agendas or even to allow others to control their lives instead of receiving help.

A number of seemingly physical diseases which are treated by religious healers are in fact consequences of psychological phenomena including somatoform disorders, which is why medical doctors are unable to point out the cause of the condition, as medical doctors are specialized concerning medical diseases and concerning putting forth diagnoses regarding those kinds of diseases – not psychological disorders. This lack of diagnosis is exploited by superstitious circles to give their very own explanations according to their mental lexica. The explanation in superstitious, Muslim circles might be Jinn-possession, the Evil Eye, or magic.

Various forms of seances (including exorcism) can function as therapy – i.e., there is an entirely natural explanation to why the seances might seem to work and thus confirm that exorcism has an effect and accordingly confirm the superstition connected to the exorcism, both for the spectator, the patient, and the exorcist himself.

This should clarify how this kind of superstition has been 'confirmed' throughout the ages. People had a superstitious idea which they interpreted the reality through thereby perceiving the concept as being

confirmed by reality. It's, yet again, the case, where an idea is superimposed on the interpretation of reality, and just as in the case of rain dance there are a lot of myths and stories which throughout the generations "confirm" the validity and correctness of the idea through a misinterpretation of reality. This "confirmation" has then been pushed onto the interpretation of Islamic texts to consequently confirm the interpretation through a misinterpretation of reality.

Conclusion

Irrefutable, Islamic evidence confirm the existence of Jinn. The only established thing about the abilities that Jinn have is that they can whisper to us in a way that can't be measured with instruments or the hearing. The terms Satan and *shayteen* can be employed symbolically for something foul, something evil, and something harmful.

This brief examination should suffice to reject the various, imaginative myths that exist about Jinn. Some verses are misinterpreted to confirm superstition; however, these interpretations have no foundation. There are weak narrations confirming Jinn-possession, but weak narrations are to be rejected, which is why there isn't a foundation for this idea or belief.

Instead of believing that people have been possessed by Jinn, they should be offered help, as the symptoms traditionally associated with Jinn-possession typically indicate either sleep paralysis, epilepsy, or psychological disorders. Accordingly, people should seek the necessary help instead of having someone try to exorcize Jinn based on their superstitious notions and thereby worsen the condition of the patient.

Magic

The idea of magic, including magical thinking, entails an explanation in cases where one is unable to point out the causal relationship. This belongs to the category where the principle of causality is employed in a wrongful manner per definition. In other words, this means that cases where one fails to uncover the causal relationship are, initially, categorized as magic. And since it presumes the principle of causality, cause, and effect, to begin with, to explain the particular phenomenon then magic is per definition the lack of a causal explanation but paradoxically enough still a result of expecting a causal relationship between a sensuous, and at the same time, a natural effect with a supernatural cause.

As various civilizations, disregarded their technological levels, have experienced, what was for them, unexplanatory phenomena some of them employed magic as an explanation. Sometimes the alternative was that they invented another supernatural cause to explain the phenomenon.

This was especially the case in the context of the notion of authority. The King or the emperor was either appointed by God or by the gods - or was a god. This claim was necessary for the notion of sovereignty to make sense; why should this particular person, this particular family, this particular house, or this particular nation have the right to dictate laws, rules, and be obeyed?

In this context, magic functioned as a confirming factor that contributed to the idea of authority for this particular element; the King or the Emperor was either appointed by God or possessed magical abilities as a minimum which lifted him up to the level where he self-evidently should possess the authority.

These imaginative divine or magical powers were manifest by the fact that the King or the Emperor had powerful wizards amongst his subjects who after drawing on the powers, he possessed, also possessed mighty powers, which is why the King or Emperor should be obeyed.

The idea of magic thus served a purpose on two levels:

- 1) As a far-reaching standard explanation to unexplanatory phenomena.
- 2) As a consolidating factor with regards to the power or authority of the King or the Emperor.

The idea of magic thus hasn't got a rational justification and is surrounded by mystery due to the same. Thus, there are different conceptions of precisely what magic is, however, with the common denominator being a wanting in a natural, causal explanation of a phenomenon. After this point, the understandings can be distinguished significantly from each other. Some of the most widespread perceptions are:

- Voodoo – Magic through the use of objects which are or can be associated with the victim.
- Illusions – The ability to delude reality and create optical illusions with people.
- Telekineses – The ability to move objects using the mind.

None of the above forms of magic can be shown to have a physical effect.

There isn't a causal relationship between subjecting an object belonging to someone to something through which the same happens to the owner of the object. This phenomenon can't be proven no matter how many times one was to repeat the experiment.

Arguments for the existence of magic & how to treat them

Believers in the existence of magic amongst Muslims employ some Islamic texts as an argument for the existence of Magic. In what follows, we'll examine the primary arguments, beginning with the foremost of them; the verse in which Allah ﷻ informs us about Harut and Marut.

The verse about Harut and Marut

The only, authentic, Islamic text that on the surface can give rise to the idea that Islam endorses the existence of Magic is the following verse, which is traditionally understood as follows:

﴿وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ ۖ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السَّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ ۚ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۖ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ ۚ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ۚ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“They followed what the Shaitans chanted of sorcery in the reign of Sulaiman, and Sulaiman did not disbelieve, but the Shaitans disbelieved, they taught men sorcery, and that was sent down to the two angels at Babel, Harut and Marut, yet these two taught no man until they had said: ‘Surely we are only a trial, therefore do not disbelieve.’ Even then, men learned from these two magic by which they might cause a separation between a man and his wife; and they cannot hurt with it anyone except with Allah's permission. They learned what harmed them and did not profit them, and indeed they knew that he who bought it should have no share of good in the hereafter and evil was the price for which they sold their souls; had they but known this.” (2:102)

In some Muslim circles, this verse is self-evidently understood in this manner to the extent, that this understanding is self-evident. The verse is employed to prove that magic really exists and has a physical effect. However, there are other interpretations of the verse which don't confirm that magic is real nor that magic has an effect.

The word الشَّيَاطِينُ (the satans) can, as mentioned earlier, denote human beings, Jinn, or both. However, from history, it's clear that this part is about human beings.

Al-Wahidi provided a lot of details in the work *Asbab an-Nuzul*, which helps to understand the background of the verse:

قوله تعالى (وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ) الآية

أخبرني محمد بن عبد العزيز القنطري قال: أخبرنا أبو الفضل الحدادي قال: أخبرنا أبو يزيد الخالدي قال: أخبرني إسحاق بن إبراهيم قال: حدثنا جرير قال: أخبرنا حصين بن عبد الرحمن عن عمران بن الحارث قال: بينما نحن عند ابن عباس إذ قال: إن الشياطين كانوا يسترقون

السمع من السماء، فيجيء أحدهم بكلمة حق فإذا جرّب من أحدهم الصدق كذب معها سبعين كذبة فيبشر بها قلوب الناس، فاطلع على ذلك سليمان، فأخذها فدفنها تحت الكرسي؛ فلما مات سليمان قام شيطان بالطريق فقال: ألا أدلكم على كنز سليمان المنيع الذي لا له مثله؟ قالوا: نعم، قال: تحت الكرسي، فأخرجوه، فقالوا: هذا سحر. فتناستخته الأمم، فأنزل الله عذر سليمان (وَاتَّبِعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ)

وقال الكلبي: إن الشياطين كتبوا السحر والتارنجيات على لسان آصف: هذا ما علم آصف بن برخيا الملك، ثم دفنوها تحت مصلاه حين نزع الله ملكه، ولم يشعر بذلك سليمان؛ ولما مات سليمان استخرجوه من تحت مصلاه، وقالوا للناس: إنما ملككم سليمان بهذا فتعلموه، وأما السفلة فقالوا: هذا علم سليمان، وأقبلوا على تعلمه، ورفضوا كتب أنبيائها، ففشيت الملامة لسليمان، فلم تزل هذه حالهم حتى بعث الله محمداً،، وأنزل الله عذر سليمان على لسانه وأظهر براءته مما رمي به فقال: (وَاتَّبِعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ) الآية

أخبرنا سعيد بن العباس القرشي كتابة أن الفضل بن زكرياء حدثهم، عن أحمد بن نجدة، أخبرنا سعيد بن منصور، حدثنا عتاب بن بشر عن خصيف قال: كان سليمان إذا نبتت الشجرة قال: لأي داء أنت؟ فتقول لكذا وكذا؛ فلما نبتت شجرة الخرنوبة قال: لأي شيء أنت؟ قالت: لمسجدك أخربه، قال: تخريته؟ قالت: نعم، قال: يئس الشجرة أنت، فلم يلبث أن توفي، فجعل الناس يقولون مرضاهم: لو كان لنا مثل سليمان، فأخذت الشياطين فكتبوا كتاباً وجعلوه في مصلى سليمان وقالوا: نحن ندلكم على ما كان سليمان يداوي به، فانطلقوا فاستخرجوا ذلك الكتاب فإذا فيه سحر رقي، فأنزل الله تعالى: (وَاتَّبِعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ) إلى قوله (فلا تكفر)

قال السدي: إذا الناس في زمن سليمان اكتبوا السحر فاشتغلوا بتعلمه، فأخذ سليمان تلك الكتب وجعلها في صندوق فدفنها تحت كرسيه ونهاهم عن ذلك، ولما مات سليمان وذهب الذين كانوا يعرفون دفنه الكتب، فتمثل شيطان على صورة إنسان فأتى نفراً من بني إسرائيل وقال: هل أدلكم على كنز لا تأكلوه أبداً؟ قالوا: نعم، قال: فاحفروا تحت الكرسي فحفروا فوجدوا تلك الكتب، فلما أخرجوها قال الشيطان: إن سليمان ضبط الجن والإنس والشياطين والطيور بهذا، فاتخذ بنو إسرائيل تلك الكتب، فلذلك أكثر ما يوجد السحر في اليهود، فبرأ الله عز وجل سليمان من ذلك، وأنزل هذه الآية

“(They followed what the devils recited in the Kingdom of Sulaiman) Muhammad Bin ‘Abdelazeez al-Qantari informed us that Abu al-Fadl al-Haddadi said, I was informed by Abu Yazid al-Khalidi who said: We were informed by Ishaq Ibn Ibrahim who said: We were informed by Jarir who said, we were informed by Husayn ibn ‘Abder-Rahman who said: We were informed by ‘Imran ibn al-Harith who said ‘We were sitting with Ibn ‘Abbas, and he said: ‘The devils used to eavesdrop on the conversations in heaven. One of them would then bring a word of truth from therein and when he had gained people’s trust, he would add 70 lies to it. When Sulaiman came to know about it, he took it and buried it under his throne. When he died, a devil stood in the street and asked: ‘Shall I guide you to Solomon’s guarded treasure, the like of which no one has seen?’ They said: ‘Yes.’ He said: ‘It’s under his throne, go to it and dig it up.’ They said: ‘This is magic.’ Different nations then copied it from them. And Allah ﷻ cleared the reputation of Sulaiman ﷺ through revelation.’

Al-Kalbi said: ‘The devils wrote down magic and talismans and attributed them to Asaf ibn Barakhiya. They wrote: ‘This is what Asaf ibn Barakhiya has taught king Solomon’ and they buried it in the place where Solomon worshipped without him realizing it. This happened when Solomon was stripped of his kingdom. When Solomon died, they unearthed it from under his place of worship and said to people: ‘Solomon left this in your possession so that you learn it.’ As for the scholars of the Children of Israel, they said: ‘Allah forbid that this be the knowledge of Solomon.’ The lowly among people said: ‘This is Solomon’s knowledge,’ and therefore sought its knowledge and rejected the scriptures of their prophets. Solomon was later blamed for this, and this remained the case until Allah sent Muhammad, Allah bless him and give him peace. Allah revealed Solomons excuse which was revealed in His own words. He showed Solomon’s innocence from what he was blamed for (And they followed that which the devils falsely related against the kingdom of Solomon ...)’

Sa’id Ibn al-‘Abbas al-Quraishi informed us in his epistle that Fadl Ibn Zakariyah informed them that Ahmad Bin Najdah said that Sa’id Ibn Mansur said that ‘Itab ibn Bashir Khusayf said: ‘Solomon used to ask any newly grown tree: ‘Which disease can you cure?’ The tree would say: ‘This and that!’ When the Carob tree (al-Khurnubah) grew, he

asked it: 'What are you for?' it replied: 'I am for the purpose of destroying your sanctuary!' He said: 'Would you really destroy it?' 'Yes,' came the reply. He ﷺ said: 'You are a terrible tree.' Shortly after, he died, and people said concerning their sick: 'If only we had the like of what Sulaiman had.' The satans exploited this; they wrote a book and buried it under Sulaiman's throne and said: 'We can show you what Sulaiman used to cure diseases with, then they reproduced and spread the book, promoting whatever magic contained in the book, after this Allah ﷻ revealed They followed what the devils recited in the Kingdom of Sulaiman, so don't reject.'

As-Suddi said: 'People in the time of Sulaiman wrote magic and employed it, so Sulaiman ﷺ took these books and put them in a box which he buried under his throne and prohibited them from using them. After his death, Satan came in the shape of a man to some people amongst Bani Isra'eel and said: 'Shall I show you an unlimited treasure?' They said: 'Yes.' He told them to dig under the throne. They dug and found these books when they took out the books. Satan said: 'Sulaiman used these books, and they enabled him to control Jinn, man, devils, and birds.' So, Bani Isra'eel took these books, which is why most magic is found amongst Jews. Then Allah cleared Sulaiman's name and revealed this verse.' – End of quote.

This part of the verse وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ is crucial to understand the story behind this verse.

Grammatically speaking, the word مَا can be a relative pronoun or a negator of a verb, i.e., وَمَا أُنْزِلَ can mean *and what was sent down* or *was not sent down* which are two very different meanings.

At-Tabari mentions that the interpreters of the Qur'an differed regarding what this part means. He wrote in his *Jaami' al-Bayaan* about this part:

اختلف أهل العلم في تأويل (ما) التي في قوله: { وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ } فقال بعضهم: معناه الجحد وهي بمعنى (لم) ذكر من قال ذلك

حدثني محمد بن سعد، قال: حدثني أبي، قال: حدثني عمي، قال: حدثني أبي، عن أبيه، عن ابن عباس قوله: { وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ } فإنه يقول: لم ينزل الله السحر

حدثنا ابن حميد، قال: حدثني حكام عن أبي جعفر، عن الربيع بن أنس: { وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ } قال: ما أنزل الله عليهما السحر

فتأويل الآية على هذا المعنى الذي ذكرناه عن ابن عباس والربيع من توجيههما معنى قوله: { وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ } إلى: ولم ينزل على الملكين، واتبعوا الذي تتلوا الشياطين على ملك سليمان من السحر، وما كفر سليمان ولا أنزل الله السحر على الملكين { ولكنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ } ببابل هاروت وماروت، فيكون حينئذ قوله: { ببابل وماروت وماروت } من المؤخر الذي معناه التقديم

فإن قال لنا قائل: وكيف وجه تقديم ذلك؟ قيل: وجه تقديمه أن يقال: واتبعوا ما تتلو الشياطين على ملك سليمان وما أنزل على الملكين، ولكن الشياطين كفروا يعلمون الناس السحر ببابل هاروت وماروت. فيكون معنيًا بالملكين: جبريل وميكائيل لأن سحرة اليهود فيما ذكر كانت تزعم أن الله أنزل السحر على لسان جبريل وميكائيل إلى سليمان بن داود فأكذبها الله بذلك وأخبر نبيه محمداً صلى الله عليه وسلم أن جبريل وميكائيل لم ينزلا بسحر قط، وبرأ سليمان مما نحلوه من السحر، فأخبرهم أن السحر من عمل الشياطين، وأنها تعلم الناس ببابل، وأن الذين يعلمونهم ذلك رجالان اسم أحدهما هاروت واسم الآخر ماروت فيكون هاروت وماروت على هذا التأويل ترجمة على الناس ورداً عليهم

وقال آخرون: بل تأويل (ما) التي في قوله: { وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ } (الذي)

وما The scholars differed on the interpretation of ما in the statement "The scholars differed on the interpretation of ما in the statement" some of them said: It's a negation meaning *magic was not sent down*. This was said by:

Muhammad Bin Sa'd narrated: 'My father narrated and said: My uncle narrated and said: My father narrated from his father on the authority of Ibn Abbas' that the statement وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ means that *Allah did not send down magic*.'

Ibn Humaid narrated and said: 'Hakim narrated on the authority of Abu Ja'far on the authority of Rabi' Bin Anas who said: *وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ*, i.e., *Allah did not send down magic onto them.*'

So, the interpretation of the verse with this meaning that we've mentioned from Ibn 'Abbas and Rabi' regarding the statement *وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ* is *(magic) was not sent down to the two angels*, and they followed what the devils recited in the Kingdom of Sulaiman of magic, and Sulaiman didn't deny faith. And Allah didn't send down magic with the two angels, but the devils denied faith, teaching people magic in the Babylon of Harut and Marut and the statement *in the Babylon of Harut and Harut* has been shifted and postponed (ta'khir) instead of being placed earlier (taqdim) in the statement.

If someone should ask: 'And why does the statement carry this meaning?' We would say: It becomes evident, as it is said: *They followed what the devils recited in the Kingdom of Sulaiman, and it wasn't sent down with angels, but the devils denied faith, teaching people magic in the Babylon of Harut and Marut.* And *the two angels* are a reference to Jibril and Mika'eel because (some of) the Jews used to claim that Allah sent magic on the tongues of Jibril and Mika'eel to Sulaiman, the son of Dawud. So, Allah declared it a lie and informed His Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ, that in no way were Jibril and Mika'eel sent with magic, and that Sulaiman is free from what they ascribe him of magic. So, He informed them that magic is the handiwork of the devils and that people learned magic in Babylon, and one of the persons who taught magic was called Harut, and the other was called Marut. So, Harut and Marut according to this interpretation, serve as an introduction for people to them and as a refutation of the lies against Jibril and Mika'eel.

Others said: 'No, *وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ* means *that which was sent down.*'" – End of quote.

If we examine these two interpretations, then the crux of the matter is to understand an event in history, i.e., we are examining a part of history. We've mentioned before that history can't be falsified since we

don't have access to examine historical events directly, this rules out a scientific examination of the event.

However, there are two compelling arguments which clarify how the verse should be understood. The first argument concerns themes, while the other concerns the relationship between the sensuous reality and metaphysics.

The theme of the verse is a refutation of the lies of some of the Jews regarding Sulaiman عليه السلام; that their development of magic was based on his teachings.

In this regard, Allah ﷻ cleared His Prophet, Sulaiman عليه السلام from the accusations and lies; that Sulaiman عليه السلام practiced magic. So, in this regard, one could consider the two interpretations of the verse, and the rhetorical weight, clout, and possible paradoxes, they entail, thematically speaking:

If we were to see *ما* as a relative pronoun, i.e., *what*, then the verse means:

They followed what the devils recited in the Kingdom of Sulaiman, and Sulaiman didn't disbelieve, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic and what was sent down with the two angels.

Then the question remains, what sort of complete refutation, do we find in this verse if it was to carry the meaning: *Sulaiman didn't occupy himself with magic, the devils occupied themselves with it – and it was Us who revealed magic to mankind?* Theoretically speaking, all irrational and absurd ideas might be explained away with:

﴿ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ ﴾

“He can't be questioned as to what He does, whereas they are the ones who shall be questioned.” (21:23)

However, thematically and rhetorically speaking with regards to a complete refutation, it is incoherent first to clear the name and reputation of Sulaiman, place the blame on the devils, and then add,

that Allah ﷻ is the source of magic, as angels were sent with it. Even though it doesn't decide the matter, it should, however, be sufficient to make one wonder how this should be coherent rhetorically and thematically speaking.

A complete refutation would, rhetorically and thematically, fit better with the other interpretation entailing understanding ما as a negation rendering the meaning:

They followed what the devils recited in the Kingdom of Sulaiman, and Sulaiman didn't deny faith, but the devils denied faith, teaching people magic, and (magic) was not sent down with the two angels (Jibril and Mika'eel).

This interpretation is rhetorically and thematically in conformity with the theme of a complete refutation of lies and accusations:

No, Sulaiman didn't disbelieve, the devils disbelieved, and no, We did not send the two angels, Jibril and Mika'eel, with magic.

Thematically, this entails refuting both the accusations against Sulaiman ﷺ and the myths about the origin of magic; Jibril and Mika'eel did not bring magic to the Jews.

The abovementioned isn't, however, decisive, so now we'll examine the relationship between metaphysics and the sensuous reality combined with the examination of events.

A historical event cannot be employed to prove how the reality today is, i.e.; it's incorrect to interpret a narration about a historical event and then employ the conclusion to shape or distort the understanding of reality. In other words, this means that it's incorrect to try to prove that magic really exists based on an interpretation of a Quranic verse that describes an event far back in the past. So, even though it is a grammatically valid interpretation, then it's incorrect to employ this to prove that magic exists, even if one were to invent a line of thought about that maybe magic was sent down with angels and has existed ever since.

This is so because it's not possible to falsify nor confirm that angels were sent with magic. I.e., there is no way to verify or disprove that angels brought magic to mankind. Likewise, it's impossible to prove that magic – if it ever existed – stopped existing at some point in history. However, what we can examine is, whether or not magic does exist in reality.

The existence of magic cannot be proven based on reality since nothing, in reality, proves the existence of magic. It's not possible to explain phenomena and events correctly without employing the principle of causality, and magic is per definition at odds with this principle: People tend to identify magic as the cause in situations in which they fail to find the actual causal explanation. Thus, it is impossible to prove, as one is required to explore natural explanations for a phenomenon or an event.

Imam Muslim, amongst others, narrated a well-known event in his collection *Sahih Muslim*, about a man who was found dead outside Khaybar, but the Jewish population in Khaybar denied having anything to do with his death. In this regard, at no point did anyone suggest or talk about the possibility of a supernatural cause of death:

حدثني إسحق بن منصور أخبرنا بشر بن عمر قال سمعت مالك بن أنس يقول حدثني أبو ليلى عبد الله بن عبد الرحمن بن سهل عن سهل بن أبي حثمة أنه أخبره عن رجال من كبراء قومه أن عبد الله بن سهل ومحبيصة خرجا إلى خيبر من جهد أصابهم فأتى محبيصة فأخبر أن عبد الله بن سهل قد قتل وطرح في عين أو فقير فأتى يهود فقال أنتم والله قتلتموه قالوا والله ما قتلناه ثم أقبل حتى قدم على قومه فذكر لهم ذلك ثم أقبل هو وأخوه حويصة وهو أكبر منه وعبد الرحمن بن سهل فذهب محبيصة ليتكلم وهو الذي كان بخيبر فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لمحبيصة كبر كبير يريد السن فتكلم حويصة ثم تكلم محبيصة فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عليه وسلم إما أن يدوا صاحبكم وإما أن يؤذنوا بحرب فكتب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إليهم في ذلك فكتبوا إنا والله ما قتلناه فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لحويصة ومحبيصة وعبد الرحمن أتخلفون وتستحقون دم صاحبكم قالوا لا قال فتخلف لكم يهود قالوا ليسوا بمسلمين فواداه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من عنده فبعث إليهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مائة ناقة حتى أدخلت عليهم الدار فقال سهل فلقد ركضتني منها ناقة حمراء

“Abu Laila ‘Abdullah Bin ‘Abd ar-Rahman Bin Sahl reported that the elderly persons of (the tribe) had informed Sahl Bin Abu Hathmah that ‘Abdullah Bin Sahl and Muhayyisah went out to Khaibar under some distress which had afflicted them. Muhayyisah came and informed that ‘Abdullah Bin Sahl had been killed, and (his dead body) had been thrown in a well or a ditch. He came to the Jews and said: ‘By Allah, it is you who have killed him. They said: ‘By Allah, we have not killed him.’ He then came to his people and made mention of that to them. Then came he and his brother Huwayyisah, and he was older than he, and ‘Abd ar-Rahman Bin Sahl. Then Muhayyisah went to speak, and it was he who had accompanied ‘Abdullah to Khaibar, whereupon the Messenger of Allah said to Muhayyisah: ‘Observe greatness of the great (he meant the seniority of age).’ Then Huwayyisah spoke, and then Muhayyisah also spoke. Thereupon the Messenger of Allah said: ‘They should either pay blood-wit for your companion or be prepared for war.’ The Messenger of Allah wrote about it to them (to the Jews). They wrote back: ‘Verily, by Allah, we have not killed him.’ Thereupon the Messenger of Allah said to Huwayyisah, Muhayyisah, and Abd ar-Rahman: ‘Are you prepared to take an oath to entitle yourselves for the blood-wit of your companion?’ They said: ‘No.’ He (the Holy Prophet) said: ‘Then the Jews will take the oath (of their innocence).’ They said: ‘They are not Muslims.’ The Messenger of Allah, however, himself paid the blood-wit to them and sent to them one hundred camels until they entered into their houses, Sahl said: ‘One red she-camel among them kicked me.’” (Muslim)

I.e., the Prophet ﷺ limited himself to finding natural causes; at no point did he mention the possibility that the cause could be Jinn, spirits, witches, trolls, gnomes, unicorns, magic, the Evil Eye, or any other supernatural cause. The Prophet ﷺ naturally suspected the Jewish population who lived nearby, but since there wasn’t any evidence or any witnesses, it wasn’t possible for him ﷺ to convict anyone of them for the murder.

Authentic texts can be employed to explain how to view reality in a normative context, i.e., what to think or feel, if it’s good or evil, legal or illegal in and which situations. Likewise, authentic texts can be employed to describe the metaphysical dimension behind the reality that can’t be proven nor disproven, which is why the belief will rest on

the strength of the authenticity of the text. In other words, if the authenticity of the text is absolute, then the belief resulting from it must also be absolute, and if the authenticity of the text is highly probable, then the belief resulting from it must be likewise.

However, it's not justifiable to interpret a text to describe what the sensuous reality is, i.e., one mustn't employ an interpretation of a text to explain what the sensuous reality is; the sensuous reality is sufficient in itself in that regard, and the understanding of reality mustn't be shaped or distorted by religious texts.

Likewise, it's also incorrect to let superstition or other unprovable factors decide how to interpret religious texts; it is tantamount to superimpose superstition onto the texts and to distort the message of the texts.

So, the conclusion is that this verse can't be employed to prove that magic exists, as the verse should be understood in light of reality, and not the other way around; that the reality should be understood in light of an interpretation of an event mentioned in the verse.

As for the reference to magic in the verse, one can wonder what is meant by (a):

﴿يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ﴾

“teaching people magic.”

and (b):

﴿وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۖ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ﴾

“And they didn't teach anyone until the two had said: 'Verily, we are a trial, so don't deny.' So, they learned from these two what separates a man from his wife.”

Some people who believe in the existence of magic employ these statements as a confirmation of the existence of magic, and that magic has a real effect.

This is, however, not given in the text (a); instead, this is an assumption, and they read the text with this understanding, i.e., they superimpose their own beliefs onto the text. Initially, the only thing that one can understand from the text (a) with certainty is that some people taught someone else something which is termed *sibr* – it's not a confirmation of any supernatural effect. Likewise, with regards to text (b); they were able to sow discord between husband and wife: Nothing in the text suggests that it was a supernatural cause or effect, and the people who read text (b) as such, they are pushing their own understanding onto the text.

This means that the verse can't be used as an argument for the existence of magic and its supernatural effect. It would be justifiable to interpret the verse in this manner if one had already proven the existence of magic and its supernatural effect. However, at the moment, we are in a position where the existence of magic and its supernatural effect can't be proven. Thus, it's unjustifiable to interpret the verse in light of an unprovable idea, i.e., the verse mustn't be interpreted in light of superstition to confirm superstition. This would be both incoherent and a circular argumentation which would invalidate the understanding and the interpretation.

If one wished to argue that the verse is about magic which entails a supernatural effect, then one is required to prove the existence of magic and its supernatural effect first. Also, it's not sufficient to refer to scholars who weren't able to prove the existence of magic themselves and just assumed its existence due to the time they lived in. Even in those circumstances, we found individuals here and there who weren't influenced by the dominating opinions.

What is the meaning of the verse?

Then, one can consider that this verse is so ambiguous that it's not that straightforward to understand what the verse is telling us on a detailed level:

﴿وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ﴾

“They followed what the devils recited in the Kingdom of Sulayman.”

The verb تَتْلُو can be understood as *recited*, but it can also mean *lied about*, fabricated or *followed and acted according to*; thus, the verse can be interpreted in various ways depending on how one understands this word.

The preposition عَلَى can mean *against*, *on*, and *about* to mention a few meanings, so is the verse saying *about the Kingdom of Sulayman*? Alternatively, was it during his ruling period? Alternatively, was it against his Kingdom?

﴿وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا﴾

“Sulayman did not disbelieve, but the devils disbelieved.”

الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا *The devils disbelieved* How did they disbelieve? Was it due to spreading magic amongst people? Did they disbelieve by ascribing magic to Sulayman? Alternatively, is the disbelief a metaphor for magic in this context? Usually, disbelief is related to rejecting a part of the Faith and not an action in itself, so how did they disbelieve?

﴿يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ﴾

“teaching people magic, and (magic) wasn’t sent down with the two angels in the Babylon of Harut and Marut.”

يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ *They taught people magic* was this in the sense of a teacher teaching students? Alternatively, did they bury the books under the throne of Sulayman and show people where they could dig them up after which they dug them up and learned from them?

الْمَلَكَيْنِ *the two angels* It’s a reference to two angels from heaven who taught mankind magic? Is it a reference to Harut and Marut? Harut and Marut weren’t angels; they were two pious men? They were two despicable people who pretended to be good men? It was a way to clear the angels Jibril and Mika’eel from the false accusations that the Jews brought against them; namely that Jibril and Mika’eel were sent with magic? Actually, it should be read *al-malikayn*, i.e., the two Kings, King Dawud, and King Sulaiman?

بَابِلَ *Babylon* Obviously, it's the old city in Iraq? It's a city in Damawand?
It's the area between Nasibayn (In Turkey) and Ra'su'l-'Ayn?

﴿ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ﴾

"The two didn't teach anyone until they had said: We are just a trial, so don't disbelieve."

وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ *These two did not teach anyone* to teach as in to instruct?
Alternatively, they taught no one?

فَلَا تَكْفُرْ *Don't disbelieve* By learning magic? By practicing magic? Or both?

﴿ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ ﴾

"They learned from these two what separates a man from his wife."

فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا *They learned from these two* These two meaning the angels? No, the two topics; magic and disbelief. No, they learned magic instead of taking the advice of the angels?

مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ *what separates a man from his wife* It's possible to create love and hatred between spouses through magic? No, they lured one of the spouses to become a disbeliever and a polytheist which destroyed the marriage? No, by employing gossip and manipulation, they created enmity between the spouses?

The point of showing the various meanings of the different words isn't to cause confusion about the verse, but rather to illustrate, that the verse is ambiguous to the extent that the detailed understanding of the verse is highly speculative. I.e., nobody can with certainty claim that they found the correct combinations of meaning, which is why even if it's was possible to use the verse as evidence for the existence of magic and its supernatural effect, that interpretation would be so improbable that it would be the result of bias. I.e., one would find confirmation of superstition in the verse by reading the verse in light of superstition, which isn't justifiable.

This should suffice to reject the idea that magic actually exists and has a supernatural effect. Likewise, it should be clear, that the verse about Harut and Marut does not confirm the existence of magic, and the verse should be interpreted in a manner which conforms with reality: A reality in which the laws of nature applies, and phenomena are explained employing natural explanations.

If we examine the arguments of the scholars for the existence of magic and its supernatural effect, they are as follows:

Ibn Qayyim argues for magic having a supernatural effect in his work *Badai al-Fawa'id*:

وقد دل قوله: {ومن شر النفاثات في العقد} وحديث عائشة المذكور على تأثير السحر، وأن له حقيقة وقد أنكر ذلك طائفة من أهل الكلام من المعتزلة وغيرهم، وقالوا: إنه لا تأثير للسحر البتة لا في مرض ولا قتل ولا حل ولا عقد قالوا: وإنما ذلك تخيل لأعين الناظرين لا حقيقة له سوى ذلك

وهذا خلاف ما تواترت به الآثار عن الصحابة والسلف واتفق عليه الفقهاء وأهل التفسير والحديث وأرباب القلوب من أهل التصوف وما يعرفه عامة العقلاء والسحر الذي يؤثر مرضاً وثقلاً وحلاً وعقداً وحياً وبغضاً ونزيفاً وغير ذلك من الآثار موجود تعرفه عامة الناس وكثير منهم قد علمه ذوقاً بما أصيب به منه، وقوله تعالى: {من شر النفاثات في العقد} دليل على أن هذا النفث يضر المسحور في حال غيبته عنه، ولو كان الضرر لا يحصل إلا بمباشرة البدن ظاهراً، كما يقوله هؤلاء لم يكن للنفث ولا للنفاثات شر يستعاذ منه

وأيضاً فإذا جاز على الساحر أن يسحر جميع أعين الناظرين مع كثرتهم حتى يروا الشيء بخلاف ماهو به مع أن هذا تغير في إحساسهم فما الذي يحيل تأثيره في تغيير بعض أعراضهم وقواهم وطباعهم؟ وما الفرق بين التغيير الواقع في الرؤية والتغيير في صفة أخرى من صفات النفس والبدن؟ فإذا غير إحساسه حتى صار يرى الساكن متحركاً والمتصل منفصلاً، والميت حياً، فما المحيل لأن يغير صفات نفسه حتى يجعل المحبوب إليه بغضاً والبغض محبوباً، وغير ذلك من التأثيرات

“The statement *and from the evil of those who blow on knots* and the mentioned narration by ‘Aisha is a reference to the effect of magic and that it’s real. A group of people amongst the scholastics including al-Mu’tazilah and others deny this. They say: *Magic has no effect whatsoever*

regarding illness, murder, opening (knots), or knots. These are merely illusions for the spectators, they have no effect besides this.

Also, this conflicts with what has been mass-transmitted from the sahabah and the earliest generations. The jurists, interpreters of the Qur'an, scholars of *hadith*, and the pious amongst the Sufis all agree that magic has an effect. Furthermore, there are narrations about the effect of magic known by the masses, and many people amongst them have experience with magic themselves. Also, if actual harm couldn't be caused, as claimed by these, then there wouldn't be a need to seek refuge from blowing (on knots).

Moreover, besides that, if it was possible for the magician to bewitch the eyes of the spectators in significant numbers to the extent that they saw something which wasn't what they believed, what should then hinder this effect in their senses with regards to changes in their symptoms, appetite, and medicine? And if a change occurs in their sensing to the extent that the one sitting still is seen moving, the comprehensible as incomprehensible, and the dead as living, then what hinders the possibility of further effects, as it's the attributes themselves which are changes to the extent, that the beloved is hated, and the hated is loved, and other such effects." – End of quote.

Al-Baghwi writes in *Sharh as-Sunnah* that al-Khattabi said:

قد أنكر قوم من أصحاب الطبائع السحر، وأبطلوا حقيقته، ودفع آخرون من أهل الكلام هذا الحديث وقالوا: لو جاز أن يكون له تأثير في رسول الله، لم يؤمن أن يؤثر ذلك فيما يوحى إليه من أمر الشرع، فيكون فيه ضلال الأمة، والجواب أن السحر ثابت، وحقيقته موجودة، اتفق أكثر الأمم من العرب، والفرس، والهند، وبعض الروم على إثباته، وهؤلاء أفضل سكان أهل الأرض، وأكثرهم علماً وحكمة، وقد قال الله تعالى: (يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السَّحْرَ) وأمر بالاستعاذه منه، فقال عز وجل: (ومن شرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ) وورد في ذلك عن رسول الله أخبار لا ينكرها إلا من أنكر العيان والضرورة، وفرَّع الفقهاء فيها يلزم الساحر من العقوبة، وما لا أصل له لا يبلغ هذا المبلغ في الشهرة والاستفاضة، فنفي السحر جهل، والرد على من نفاه لعوِّ وفضل "Some scientists denied magic, and they invalidated its effect, and others amongst the scholastics (ahl 'ilm ul-kalam) defended this stance and said: 'If it were possible that magic should influence the Messenger

of Allah then he wouldn't be able to believe what was revealed to him of laws, as there would be misguidance in it for this nation.' And the answer to this is that the existence of magic has been proven, and its effect is real. Most people amongst the Arabs, the Persians, The Indians, and some amongst the Romans agree that magic has been proven to exist, and these are amongst the most influential, wise, and knowledgeable. Allah ﷻ said *They taught people magic* and ordered us to seek refuge from it and He ﷻ said *and from their evil, those who blow on knots, and there are narrations about magic influencing the Messenger of Allah* which nobody denies, except the ones who deny the obvious and the self-evident." – End of Quote.

The arguments for the existence of magic can be summarized as follows:

1. The verse about Harut and Marut – this has already been treated.
2. The verse containing the order to seek refuge from the evil of those who blow on knots.
3. Many people; Muslims and Non-Muslims, believe in magic.
4. There are many narrations among people who have experienced magic.
5. If a magician can change some attributes, then it's possible for him to change basically all attributes – and this is what magic is.
6. The narration about the Prophet ﷺ being influenced by magic.

In the following, we shall examine the arguments.

The verse that orders us to seek refuge from the evil of those who blows on knots

The verse that orders us to seek refuge from a number of things, including:

﴿وَمِن شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ﴾

"And from the evil of those who blow on knots." (113:4)

The verse doesn't say that magic has an effect. We seek refuge from the evil, the people who blow on knots characterize or symbolize, not

from the blowing on knots itself, as the blowing itself doesn't have an effect and isn't mentioned.

We seek refuge from the evil of these people, not from the blowing of these people nor the effect that some Muslims imagine exists. Grammatically, this is evident due to the reference being to the people performing the action – i.e., الفاعل (al-faa'il) – the agent and not the action الفعل (al-fi'l) – i.e., النَّفَّاثَاتِ (an-naffathaat) which is a substantive (a noun) in the plural, feminine. If the focus were on the action or the blowing on the knots, then the word النفث (an-naft) would have been employed – the blowing on the knots.

This clearly shows that the verse can't serve as an argument for the blowing on the knots having an effect.

Many people believe magic is real.

Many people believe magic is real, i.e., that it exists, which is why it must be real. This is one of the blandest arguments ever for the correctness of an idea, and it's self-evident why it's invalid.

There are many narrations by people who have experienced magic. Therefore, magic must exist. The brief answer to this is that the formation of myths based on what people think they've seen isn't an argument for the existence of Big Foot, aliens, Yeties, Santa Claus, gnomes, ghost, or other weird things which people report having seen or experienced.

If one can change attributes, then it is magic

Regarding changing attributes, then the person who brings forth such as argument hasn't fully grasped what an illusion is. An Illusion is not when someone actually changes the reality. Instead, it's a trick based on a kind of and employing the psychology of optical illusions, i.e., the sight is deceived. This is the meaning of the verse:

﴿ قَالَ الْقَوَا ۖ فَلَمَّا الْقَوَا سَحَرُوا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَرْهَبُوهُمْ وَجَاءُوا بِسِحْرٍ عَظِيمٍ ۖ ﴾

“He said: ‘Throw you first.’ When they threw, they enchanted the eyes of people and scared them, and they brought a powerful magic.” (7:116)

This *powerful magic* was merely tricks and deception, which is clear if we continue reading:

﴿ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۚ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾ فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

“And We revealed to Musa: ‘Throw your staff.’ And it swallowed their deception.” (7:117-118)

We are told that this *powerful magic* merely made it appear like the ropes and the staffs were moving:

﴿ قَالَ بَلْ أَلْقُوا ۚ فَإِذَا حِجَابٌ مِّنْ عَصِيئِهِمْ يَخِيلُ إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ تَسْعَىٰ ﴾

“He said: ‘No, throw you first.’ When they did, it appeared as if their ropes and staffs were moving.” (20:66)

Then we’re told that magicians merely employ tricks and cunningness which was termed their *powerful magic*:

﴿ فَأَوْجَسَ فِي نَفْسِهِ خِيفَةً مُّوسَىٰ ﴿٦٧﴾ قُلْنَا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٦٨﴾ وَأَلْقِ مَا فِي يَمِينِكَ تَلْقَفْ مَا صَنَعُوا ۚ إِنَّمَا صَنَعُوا كَيْدٌ سَاجِرٌ ۖ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاجِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَىٰ ﴾

“Musa conceived in his mind a fear. We said: Fear not, surely you shall be the uppermost, and cast down what is in your right hand; it shall devour what they have wrought; they have wrought only the plan of a magician, and the magician shall not be successful wheresoever he may come from.” (20:67-69)

Thus, no change occurs in the attributes or the reality; the perception of the spectators is manipulated through optical illusions and sleight of hand.

The Prophet ﷺ was bewitched

The narration by 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) through many chains of narration has many challenges with regards to its content (matn) and also with regards to its various chains of narration (isnad):

It's extremely problematic due to the notion of the infallibility of the Prophet ﷺ that he, allegedly, was influenced by magic:

- It can lead to agreeing with the false accusations against the Prophet ﷺ by Quraysh and other non-Muslims.
- The different variants of the narration vary a lot.
- The narrators in the chains of narration are problematic.

In the following, we'll examine the mentioned points in depth.

The infallibility of the Prophet ﷺ & magic

The Prophet ﷺ was infallible in his transmission of the Islamic message, as an error in the deliverance of the message would entail a mistake by Allah ﷻ as to where He ﷻ placed the message and who He ﷻ chose to deliver it to mankind. His ﷺ actions, statements, and acceptance are therefore preserved in the guise of narrations, as these three categories represent Revelation from Allah ﷻ.

If he ﷺ was bewitched and didn't know what he ﷺ was saying or doing, then it compromises the entire idea of there aren't any mistakes in the deliverance of the revelation, because how should we then know if the statements, the actions, and the acceptance in that period were from Revelation. Were they due to the effect of magic or due to Revelation? Some scholars tried to solve this in a manner which didn't lead to this problem.

For instance, Qadi Iyad in his work, *ash-Shifa*, argued for a way to reconcile the narration of him ﷺ being bewitched and his infallibility.

He explained that the magic didn't influence the mind of the Prophet at all, it was only physical effects such as his body or his vision like in the cases of diseases.

The problem with this attempt to explain away the contradiction is that it actually is a rejection of the content of the narrations and actually replaces it with other content, as the narrations clearly state that he ﷺ imagined things by himself and not as a result of wrong or lacking sense impressions or weakness in the body.

Another attempt to deal with the apparent contradiction between the infallibility of the Prophet ﷺ and the prophet imagining things included drawing an analogy to when Musa عليه السلام imagined that the ropes and staffs of the sorcerers became snakes. Mohammad Jamili writes in *Clarity amidst confusion – A clarification of the hadith which describes the effect of magic on the Prophet Muhammad* on page 62:

“Actually, the verse is a proof that the effect Musa عليه السلام felt on his vision is similar to what the Prophet ﷺ experienced as mentioned in the narration about Labid Bin al-A'sam, as the same word *takhyil* is employed in both sources, and it entails what they saw and not that their minds were influenced.”

The analogy is based on that the words *يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ yukhayyalu ilaihi* are employed in both the verse and the narration, which is why neither Musa عليه السلام or the Prophet ﷺ experienced an effect on their minds.

If we read about the event involving Musa عليه السلام:

﴿ قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِمَّا أَنْ تُلْقِيَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ نَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَلْقَى ﴾ ٦٥ ﴿ قَالَ بَلْ أَلْقُوا فَإِذَا حِبالُهُمْ وَعَصِيُّهُمْ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهَا تَسْعَى ﴾ ٦٦ ﴿ فَأَوْجَسَ فِي نَفْسِهِ خِيفَةً مُوسَى ﴾ ٦٧ ﴿ قُلْنَا لَا تَخَفْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْأَعْلَى ﴾ ٦٨ ﴿ وَالْقَى مَا فِي يَمِينِكَ تَلْقَفُ مَا صَنَعُوا إِنَّمَا صَنَعُوا كَيْدٌ سَاجِرٌ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاجِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَى ﴾ ٦٩ ﴿ فَأَلْقَى السَّحَرَةُ سُجَّدًا قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ هَارُونَ وَمُوسَى ﴾

“They said: O Musa! will you cast, or shall we be the first who cast down? He said: Nay! Cast down. Then lo! Their cords and their rods; it was imaged to him on account of their magic as if they were running. So, Musa conceived in his mind a fear. We said: ‘Fear not, surely you

shall be the uppermost. And cast down what is in your right hand; it shall devour what they have wrought; they have wrought only the plan of a magician, and the magician shall not be successful wheresoever he may come from.' And the magicians were cast down making obeisance; they said: 'We believe in the Lord of Haroun and Musa.'" (20:65-70)

From this, it is clear that the sorcerers merely made it appear as if their ropes and staffs were moving by themselves. It was actually merely a trick employing physical laws and manipulating the reality. This is evident from the verses.

The narration in question is:

سُحِرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى كَانَ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ الشَّيْءَ وَمَا يَفْعَلُهُ

"The Prophet ﷺ was bewitched to the extent that he imagined he had done something, but he hadn't."

There is no comparison between these two events, although the same term is employed.

In the case of Musa, the sorcerers make it appear as if the ropes and the staffs are moving by themselves which scares Musa عليه السلام, as he can't see what causes them to move. In the case of the Prophet ﷺ, the narration tells us that Labid Bin al-A'sam employs some objects which makes the Prophet ﷺ imagine things without having seen Labid. Musa عليه السلام becomes frightened using sight, whereas the prophet ﷺ, according to the narration, is confused without having seen Labid. The situation of Musa is simple psychology; he sees something, he can't explain and becomes scared, whereas the Prophet, according to the narration, becomes influenced by magic without having seen anything; in an unexplanatory manner he becomes confused and begins to imagine things.

The fear of Musa عليه السلام occurs in the situation, and Allah calms him down, and he returns to a normal condition, whereas the Prophet ﷺ, according to the narration, is confused and imagines things for a longer period. The fear of Musa is caused by what he can see, whereas the confusion and imagining things of the Prophet ﷺ, according to the narration, is due to being influenced by magic by Labid without being

in contact with him. Musa عليه السلام is scared, but he doesn't imagine things concerning what he has done and not done, whereas the Prophet ﷺ is confused and imagines such things. The condition of Musa عليه السلام is a natural reaction to an event, where the condition of the Prophet ﷺ, according to the narration, is confusion and imagining things without any physical contact to Labid. So, in the case of Musa عليه السلام, his mind is intact, and the reality has been manipulated, whereas, in the case of the Prophet ﷺ, his mind has been influenced causing him to imagine things.

So, there is no basis whatsoever to draw parallels between the two events. The words employed are the same, but they are used to describe two very different situations which one can't draw parallels between employing wordplay.

If one believes that magic exists and that it's possible for the Prophet ﷺ to being bewitched, one will undermine the Traditions of the Prophet ﷺ as a source of legislation and explanation to the Qur'an. It will be impossible to know, when the actions, statements, and acceptance of the Prophet ﷺ are due to influence by magic and when they are Revelation. I.e., the problem reaches far beyond the period in which the Prophet ﷺ, allegedly, was bewitched, as it becomes impossible to know if the Prophet ﷺ was bewitched at other occasions without his knowledge and the knowledge of others.

Conflict with verses of the Qur'an?

Quraysh didn't know what to say about the Prophet ﷺ, so one of the explanations they gave was that the Prophet ﷺ was insane as a result of being bewitched. Allah ﷻ rebutted their accusation:

﴿ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَسْتَمِعُونَ بِهِ إِذْ يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِذْ هُمْ نَجْوَىٰ إِذْ يَقُولُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّا تَبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُورًا ﴾

"We know what they want to hear when they listen to you. They whisper to each other and say: 'You are only following a bewitched person.'" (17:47)

It's surprising that there are Muslims who fail to see the apparent paradox in believing that the Prophet ﷺ was bewitched, as the verse, initially, rules it out.

Another interpretation of the verse, however, allows one to understand the verse as *You don't follow anything but a weak and lacking being who eats and drinks, i.e., not an angel* similarly to another verse of the Qur'an:

﴿ وَقَالُوا مَالِ هَٰذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ ۚ لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونُ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا ۝ ﴾

“They say: ‘Why does this messenger eat food and walk around the markets? Why hasn’t there been sent an angel to him who can warn with him?’” (25:7)

Therefore, this criticism isn't conclusive, and the verse can't be employed as an absolute argument against the narration – even though the Muslims who believe in the narration, typically, interpret the verse as *You don't follow anything but a bewitched man* which does lead to a conflict between the narration and their interpretation of the verse.

Different variations of the same narration

There are quite many variations of the same narration, each of which is incompatible with the other variations in their manner of explaining what happened. This amount of conflict in the details is characteristic of myths. In the following, we'll mention some of them:

In some variants, Labid was the one who bewitched the Prophet ﷺ, in other variants, the sisters of Labid did it. In some variants, Jibril came alone, in other Jibril and Mika'eel came, and in others to unknown angels came. In some variants, a comb was used, while in others, it was a string with knots on it. In some variants, Allah ﷻ cured the Prophet ﷺ, while in others, the cure came through the revelation of two chapters of the Qur'an. In some variants, Labid was killed, while in others, he wasn't. In some variants, the Prophet ﷺ went to the well himself, in others he ﷺ sent his companions, and in others, both he ﷺ and his companions went to the well. In some variants, the objects employed to bewitch him ﷺ were taken out of the well, while in others, they weren't. In some variants, he ﷺ imagined that he did something,

but didn't do it, whereas in other variants he thought about doing something, but he forgot to do so. In some variants 'Aisha asks him why he ﷺ didn't show the objects to people, while in others, she asked why he didn't expose Labid.

Weak, singular chains of narration

Even though there are many narrations about the Prophet ﷺ being influenced by magic, none of them have corroborating narrators. Instead, all of them are singular which isn't sufficient considering how incredible this event is.

There are two relevant categories of chains of narration of which the first has several chains of narration which all lead back to one particular individual in the chain; Hisham Bin 'Urwah:

حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ مُوسَى، أَخْبَرَنَا عِيسَى، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ سَجَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَقَالَ اللَّيْثُ كَتَبَ إِلَيَّ هِشَامٌ أَنَّهُ سَمِعَهُ وَوَعَاهُ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ سَجَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى كَانَ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ الشَّيْءَ وَمَا يَفْعَلُهُ، حَتَّى كَانَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ دَعَا وَدَعَا، ثُمَّ قَالَ أَشْعَرْتُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَفْتَانِي فِيمَا فِيهِ شِفَائِي أَتَانِي رَجُلَانِ، فَقَعَدَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِي وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلِي، فَقَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا لِلْآخَرِ مَا وَجَعَ الرَّجُلُ قَالَ مَطْبُوبٌ قَالَ وَمَنْ طَبَّهُ قَالَ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ قَالَ فِي مَاذَا قَالَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاقَّةٍ وَجُفٍّ طُلَعَةٍ ذَكَرَ قَالَ فَأَيْنَ هُوَ قَالَ فِي بَثْرِ ذُرْوَانَ فَخَرَجَ إِلَيْهَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ رَجَعَ فَقَالَ لِعَائِشَةَ حِينَ رَجَعَ نَحَلَهَا كَأَنَّهَا رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ فَقُلْتُ اسْتَخْرَجْتَهُ فَقَالَ: لَا أَمَّا أَنَا فَقَدْ شَفَّانِي اللَّهُ، وَخَشِيتُ أَنْ يُثِيرَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ شَرًّا، ثُمَّ دُفِنَتِ الْبَيْتُ

“Aisha narrated: ‘Magic was worked on the Prophet so that he began to imagine that he was doing a thing which he was not actually doing. One day he invoked Allah for a long period and then said: ‘I feel that Allah has inspired me as to how to cure myself. Two persons came to me (in my dream) and sat, one by my head and the other by my feet. One of them asked the other: ‘What is the ailment of this man?’ The other replied: ‘He has been bewitched.’ The first asked: ‘Who has bewitched him?’ The other replied: ‘Labid Bin al-A’sam.’ The first one asked: ‘What material has he used?’ The other replied: ‘A comb, the hair gathered on it, and the outer skin of the pollen of the male date-palm.’ The first asked: ‘Where is it?’ The other replied: ‘It is in the well

of Dharwan.” So, the Prophet went out towards the well and then returned and said to me on his return: “The well’s date-palms are like the heads of the devils.’ I asked: ‘Did you take out those things with which the magic was worked?’ He said: ‘No, for I have been cured by Allah, and I am afraid that this action may spread evil amongst the people.’ Later on, the well was filled up with earth.” (al-Bukhari)

Chain of narration 1: Ibrahim Bin Musa – ‘Isa – Hisham Bin ‘Urwah – ‘Urwah – ‘Aishah

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى، حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامٌ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سُحِرَ حَتَّى كَانَ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ صَنَعَ شَيْئًا وَلَمْ يَصْنَعْهُ

“Aishah narrated: Once, the Prophet was bewitched, so he imagined he had done things, which in fact he had not done.” (al-Bukhari)

Chain of narration 2: Muhammad Bin al-Muthanna - Yahya Bin Sa'id bin Farroukh al-Qatan (Basrah) - Hisham Bin 'Urwa – ‘Urwa ibn al-Zubayr – ‘Aisha Bint Abi Bakr

حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ مُوسَى، أَخْبَرَنَا عِمْسَى بْنُ يُوْنُسَ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ سَحَرَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ بَنِي زُرَيْقٍ يُقَالُ لَهُ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ، حَتَّى كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ الشَّيْءَ وَمَا فَعَلَهُ، حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ أَوْ ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ وَهُوَ عِنْدِي لَكِنِّهِ دَعَا وَدَعَا ثُمَّ قَالَ يَا عَائِشَةُ، أَشْعُرْتُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَفْتَانِي فِيمَا اسْتَفْتَيْتُهُ فِيهِ، أَتَانِي رَجُلَانِ فَقَعَدَا أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِي، وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلِي، فَقَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا لِصَاحِبِهِ مَا وَجَعَ الرَّجُلُ فَقَالَ مَطْبُوبٌ قَالَ مَنْ طَبَّهُ قَالَ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ قَالَ فِي أَيِّ شَيْءٍ قَالَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاطَةٍ، وَجُفٍّ طَلَعَ نَخْلَةً ذَكَرَ قَالَ وَأَيْنَ هُوَ قَالَ فِي بئرِ ذُرْوَانَ فَأَتَاهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي نَاسٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ فَبَجَاءَ فَقَالَ يَا عَائِشَةُ كَأَنَّ مَاءَهَا نَقَاعَةُ الْجَنَّةِ، أَوْ كَأَنَّ رُءُوسَ نَخْلِهَا رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا اسْتَخْرَجَهُ قَالَ قَدْ عَافَانِي اللَّهُ، فَكَرِهْتُ أَنْ أَتَوَّرَ عَلَى النَّاسِ فِيهِ شَرًّا فَأَمَرَ بِهَا فَدُفِنَتْ. تَابَعَهُ أَبُو أُسَامَةَ وَأَبُو صَمْرَةَ وَابْنُ أَبِي الرِّئَادِ عَنْ هِشَامٍ وَقَالَ اللَّيْثُ وَابْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ عَنْ هِشَامٍ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاقَةٍ. يُقَالُ الْمُشَاطَةُ مَا يَخْرُجُ مِنَ الشَّعْرِ إِذَا مُشِطَ، وَالْمُشَاقَةُ مِنَ مُشَاقَةِ الْكُتَّانِ

“Aishah narrated: ‘A man called Labid Bin al-A’sam from the tribe of Bani Zaraiq worked magic on the Messenger of Allah till the Messenger of Allah was imagining that he had done a thing that he had not really

done. One day or one night he was with us, he invoked Allah and invoked for a long period, and then said: 'O 'Aisha! Do you know that Allah has instructed me concerning the matter, I have asked Him about? Two men came to me, and one of them sat near my head and the other near my feet. One of them said to his companion: 'What is the disease of this man?' The other replied: 'He is under the effect of magic.' The first one asked: 'Who has worked the magic on him?' The other replied: 'Labid Bin al-A'sam.' The first one asked: 'What material did he use?' The other replied: 'A comb and the hairs stuck to it and the skin of pollen of a male date palm.' The first one asked: 'Where is it?' The other replied: 'In the well of Dharwan.' So, the Messenger of Allah along with some of his companions went there and came back, and he said: 'O 'Aisha, the color of its water is like the infusion of Henna leaves. The tops of the date-palm trees near it are like the heads of the devils.' I asked: 'O Allah's Messenger? Why did you not show it (to the people)?' He said: 'Since Allah cured me, I disliked to let evil spread among the people.' Then he ordered that the well should be filled up with earth.'" (al-Bukhari)

Chain of narration 3: Ibrahim Bin Musa al-Razi al-Fara' – 'Isa Bin Yonus Bin Abi Ishaq (Kufa) - Hisham Bin 'Urwa – 'Urwa Ibn al-Zubayr – 'Aisha Bint Abi Bakr

حَدَّثَنَا عُبَيْدُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ سَجَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى إِنَّهُ لَيُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ الشَّيْءَ وَمَا فَعَلَهُ، حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ وَهُوَ عِنْدِي دَعَا اللَّهَ وَدَعَا، ثُمَّ قَالَ أَشْعَرْتُ يَا عَائِشَةُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَفْتَانِي فِيمَا اسْتَفْتَيْتُهُ فِيهِ قُلْتُ وَمَا ذَاكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ جَاءَنِي رَجُلَانِ، فَجَلَسَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِي وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلِي، ثُمَّ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا لِصَاحِبِهِ مَا وَجَعَ الرَّجُلُ قَالَ مَطْبُوبٌ قَالَ وَمَنْ طَبَّهُ قَالَ لَيْدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ، الْيَهُودِيُّ مِنْ بَنِي زُرَيْقٍ. قَالَ فِيمَا ذَا قَالَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاطَةٍ، وَجِفَّ طَلْعَةٍ ذَكَرَ قَالَ فَأَيْنَ هُوَ قَالَ فِي بئرِ ذِي أَرْوَانَ قَالَ فَذَهَبَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي أَنْاسٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ إِلَى الْبئرِ، فَنَظَرَ إِلَيْهَا وَعَلَيْهَا نَحْلٌ، ثُمَّ رَجَعَ إِلَى عَائِشَةَ فَقَالَ وَاللَّهِ لَكَأَنَّ مَاءَهَا نَقَاعَةُ الْجِنِّاءِ، وَلَكَأَنَّ نَحْلَهَا رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَفَأَخْرَجْتَهُ قَالَ لَا، أَمَّا أَنَا فَقَدْ عَافَانِي اللَّهُ وَشَفَانِي، وَخَشِيتُ أَنْ تُثَوِّرَ عَلَيَّ النَّاسَ مِنْهُ شَرًّا وَأَمَرَ بِهَا فَدُفِنَتْ

"Aisha narrated: 'Magic was worked on the Messenger of Allah so that he began to imagine that he had done something although he had not. One day while he was with me, he invoked Allah and invoked for a

long period and then said: 'O 'Aisha! Do you know that Allah has instructed me regarding the matter I asked Him about?' I asked, 'What is that, O Allah's Messenger?' He said, 'Two men came to me; one of them sat near my head, and the other sat near my feet. One of them asked his companion: 'What is the disease of this man?' The other replied: 'He is under the effect of magic.' The first one asked: 'Who has worked magic on him?' The other replied: 'Labid Bin al-A'sam, a Jew from the tribe of Bani Zuraiq.' The first one (asked): 'With what has it been done?' The other replied: 'With a comb and the hair stuck to it and some skin of the pollen of a male date palm tree.' The first one asked, 'Where is it?' The other replied: 'In the well of Dharwan.' Then the Prophet went along with some of his companions to that well and looked at that, and there were date palms near to it. Then he returned to me and said: 'By Allah, the water of that well was (red) like the infusion of Henna leaves, and its date-palms were like the heads of devils.' I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Did you take those materials out of the pollen skin?' He said, 'No! As for me, Allah has healed me and cured me, and I was afraid that (by showing that to the people), I would spread evil among them.' Then he ordered that the well be filled up with earth, and it was filled up with earth.'" (al-Bukhari)

Chain 4: 'Ubaid Bin Isma'il al-Quraishi - Hammad Bin Usamah (Kufa)
- Hisham Bin 'Urwa - 'Urwa Ibn al-Zubayr - 'Aisha Bint Abi Bakr

حَدَّثَنَا الْحُمَيْدِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ مَكَثَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَذَا وَكَذَا يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَأْتِي أَهْلَهُ وَلَا يَأْتِي، قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ فَقَالَ لِي ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ يَا عَائِشَةُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَفْتَانِي فِي أَمْرِ اسْتَفْتَيْتُهُ فِيهِ، أَتَانِي رَجُلَانِ، فَجَلَسَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رِجْلِي وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رَأْسِي، فَقَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَ رِجْلِي لِلَّذِي عِنْدَ رَأْسِي مَا بَالُ الرَّجُلِ قَالَ مَطْبُوبٌ. يَغْنِي مَسْحُورًا قَالَ وَمَنْ طَبَّهُ قَالَ لَبِيدُ بْنُ أَعْصَمٍ قَالَ وَفِيمَ قَالَ فِي جُفٍّ طَلْعَةٍ ذَكَرَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَافَةٍ، تَحْتَ رَعُوفَةٍ فِي بَيْتِ دُرَّوَانَ فَجَاءَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ هَذِهِ الْبَيْتُ الَّتِي أُرِيَتْهَا كَأَنَّ رُغُوسَ نَحَلِهَا رُغُوسَ الشَّيَاطِينِ، وَكَأَنَّ مَاءَهَا نُقَاعَةُ الْحِثَاءِ فَأَمَرَ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأُخْرِجَ قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَهَلَا - تَغْنِي - تَنْشُرَتْ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَمَّا اللَّهُ فَقَدْ شَفَانِي، وَأَمَّا أَنَا فَأَكْرَهُ أَنْ أُبَيِّرَ عَلَى النَّاسِ شَرًّا قَالَتْ وَلَبِيدُ بْنُ أَعْصَمٍ رَجُلٌ مِنْ بَنِي زُرَيْقٍ حَلِيفٌ لِلْيَهُودِ

"Aisha narrated that the Prophet continued for such-and-such period imagining that he has slept (had sexual relations) with his wives, and in

fact, he had not. One day he said, to me: 'O 'Aisha! Allah has instructed me regarding a matter about which I had asked Him. There came to me two men, one of them sat near my feet and the other near my head. The one near my feet, asked the one near my head (pointing at me): 'What is wrong with this man?' The latter replied: 'He is under the effect of magic.' The first one asked: 'Who had worked magic on him?' The other replied: 'Labid Bin al-A'sam.' The first one asked: 'What material (did he use)?' The other replied: 'The skin of the pollen of a male date-tree with a comb and the hair stuck to it, kept under a stone in the well of Dharwan.' Then the Prophet went to that well and said: 'This is the same well, which was shown to me in the dream. The tops of its date-palm trees look like the heads of the devils, and its water looks like the Henna infusion.' Then the Prophet ordered that those things be taken out. I said: "O Messenger of Allah! Won't you disclose (the magic object)?" The Prophet said: 'Allah has cured me, and I hate to circulate evil among the people.' 'Aisha added: 'Labid Bin al-A'sam (the magician) was a man from Bani Zuraiq, an ally of the Jews.'" (al-Bukhari)

Chain of narration 5: 'Abdullah Bin al-Zubair Bin 'Isa - Sufyan Bin 'Uyaynah (Kufah) - Hisham Bin 'Urwa - 'Urwa ibn al-Zubayr - 'Aisha Bint Abi Bakr

حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ مُنْدَرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَنَسُ بْنُ عِيَاضٍ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ طُبَّ حَتَّى إِنَّهُ لَيُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ قَدْ صَنَعَ الشَّيْءَ وَمَا صَنَعَهُ، وَإِنَّهُ دَعَا رَبَّهُ ثُمَّ قَالَ أَشْعَرْتُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَفْتَانِي فِيمَا اسْتَفْتَيْتُهُ فِيهِ فَقَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ فَمَا ذَاكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ جَاءَنِي رَجُلَانِ فَجَلَسَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِي، وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلِي فَقَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا لِصَاحِبِهِ مَا وَجَعَ الرَّجُلُ قَالَ مَطْبُوبٌ قَالَ مَنْ طَبَّهُ قَالَ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ قَالَ فِيمَا ذَا قَالَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاطَةٍ وَجَفْتُ طَلْعَةً قَالَ فَأَتَيْنِ هُوَ قَالَ فِي ذُرْوَانَ، وَذُرْوَانُ بَثْرٌ فِي بَنِي زُرَيْقٍ قَالَتْ فَأَتَاهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ رَجَعَ إِلَى عَائِشَةَ فَقَالَ وَاللَّهِ لَكَآنَ مَاءُهَا نُفَاعَةً الْجَنَائِ، وَلَكَآنَ نَخْلَهَا رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ قَالَتْ فَأَتَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَخْبَرَهَا عَنِ الْبَثْرِ، فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَهَلَّا أَخْرَجْتَهُ قَالَ أَمَّا أَنَا فَقَدْ شَفَانِي اللَّهُ، وَكَرِهْتُ أَنْ أُبَيِّرَ عَلَى النَّاسِ شَرًّا زَادَ عِيسَى بْنُ يُونُسَ وَاللَّيْثُ عَنْ هِشَامٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ سَجَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَدَعَا وَدَعَا وَسَاقَ الْحَدِيثَ

"Aisha narrated that the Messenger of Allah was affected by magic, so much that he used to think that he had done something which in fact, he did not do, and he invoked his Lord (for a remedy). Then (one day)

he said: 'O 'Aisha! Do you know that Allah has advised me as to the problem I consulted Him about?' 'Aisha asked: 'O Messenger of Allah! What's that?' He said: 'Two men came to me and one of them sat at my head and the other at my feet, and one of them asked his companion: 'What is wrong with this man?' The latter replied: 'He is under the effect of magic.' The former asked: 'Who has worked magic on him?' The latter replied: 'Labid Bin al-A'sam.' The former asked: 'With what did he work the magic?' The latter replied: 'With a comb and the hair stuck to the comb, and the skin of pollen of a date-palm tree.' The former asked: 'Where is it?' The latter replied: 'It is in Dharwan.' Dharwan was a well in the dwelling place of the (tribe of) Bani Zuraiq. The Messenger of Allah went to that well and returned to 'Aisha, saying: 'By Allah, the water (of the well) was as red as the infusion of Hinna, and the date-palm trees look like the heads of devils.' 'Aisha added, the Messenger of Allah came to me and informed me about the well. I asked the Prophet: 'O Messenger of Allah, why didn't you take out the skin of pollen?' He replied: 'As for me, Allah has cured me and I hated to draw the attention of the people to such evil (which they might learn and harm others with).' Hisham narrated from his father that 'Aisha said: 'The Messenger of Allah was bewitched, so he invoked Allah repeatedly requesting Him to cure him of that magic.' Hisham then narrated the above narration." (al-Bukhari)

Chain of narration 6: Ibrahim Bin Mundhir (Madinah) - Abu Damra, Anas Bin 'Ayyad (Madani) - Hisham Bin 'Urwa - 'Urwa ibn al-Zubayr - 'Aisha bint Abi Bakr

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ نُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ سَحَرَ النَّبِيُّ يَهُودِيٌّ مِنْ يَهُودِ بَنِي زُرَيْقٍ يُقَالُ لَهُ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ حَتَّى كَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُخَلِّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ الشَّيْءَ وَلَا يَفْعَلُهُ قَالَتْ حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ أَوْ كَانَ ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ دَعَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ دَعَا ثُمَّ دَعَا ثُمَّ قَالَ يَا عَائِشَةُ أَشْعَرْتِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَفْتَانِي فِيمَا اسْتَفْتَيْتُهُ فِيهِ جَاءَنِي رَجُلَانِ فَجَلَسَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِي وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلِي فَقَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَ رَأْسِي لِلَّذِي عِنْدَ رِجْلِي أَوْ الَّذِي عِنْدَ رِجْلِي لِلَّذِي عِنْدَ رَأْسِي مَا وَجَعَ الرَّجُلُ قَالَ مَطْبُوبٌ قَالَ مَنْ طَبَّهُ قَالَ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ قَالَ فِي أَيِّ شَيْءٍ قَالَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاطَةٍ وَجُفٍّ طَلَعَةٍ ذَكَرٍ قَالَ وَأَيْنَ هُوَ قَالَ فِي بَثْرِ ذِي أَرْوَانَ قَالَتْ فَأَنَاءَ النَّبِيُّ فِي أَنْاسٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ ثُمَّ جَاءَ فَقَالَ وَاللَّهِ يَا عَائِشَةُ لَكَأَنَّ مَاءَهَا نُقَاعَةُ الْجَنَاءِ وَلَكَأَنَّ نَخْلَهَا رُءُوسُ

الشَّيَاطِينِ قَالَتْ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا أُحْرِقُهُ قَالَ لَا أَمَّا أَنَا فَقَدْ عَافَانِي اللَّهُ وَكَرِهْتُ أَنْ أُثِيرَ عَلَى النَّاسِ مِنْهُ شَرًّا فَأَمَرَ بِهَا فَدُفِنَتْ

“Aisha narrated that a Jew from among the Jews of Bani Zuraiq, whose name was Labid Bin al-A'sam cast a spell on the Prophet, and the Prophet began to imagine that he had done something when he had not. One day, or one night, the Messenger of Allah supplicated, and then supplicated again. Then he said: ‘O ‘Aishah, do you know that Allah has instructed me concerning the matter I asked Him about? Two men came to me, and one of them sat at my head and the other at my feet. The one at my head said to the one at my feet, or the one at my feet said to the one at my head: ‘What is ailing this man?’ He said: ‘He has been affected by a spell.’ He said: ‘Who cast a spell on him?’ He said: ‘Labid Bin al-A'sam.’ He said: ‘With what?’ He said: ‘With a comb and the hairs stuck to it, and the spathe of a male date-palm.’ He said: ‘Where is that?’ He said: ‘In the well of Dharwan.’ She said: ‘So the Prophet went to it with a group of his Companions, then he came and said: ‘By Allah. O ‘Aishah. It was as if its water was infused with henna and its date-palms were like the heads of devils.’ She said: I said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, why don't you burn them?’ He said: ‘As for me, Allah has healed me, and I do not like to let evil spread among the people.’ Then he issued orders that the well should be filled up with earth.” (Ibn Majah)

Chain of narration 7: Abu Bakr Bin Abi Shayba – ‘Abdullah Bin Numayr (Kufah) - Hisham Bin 'Urwa – ‘Urwa Ibn al-Zubayr – ‘Aisha Bint Abi Bakr

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو كُرَيْبٍ، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ نُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ سَحَرَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَهُودِيٌّ مِنْ يَهُودِ بَنِي زُرَيْقٍ يُقَالُ لَهُ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ - قَالَتْ - حَتَّى كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ الشَّيْءَ وَمَا يَفْعَلُهُ حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ أَوْ ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ دَعَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ثُمَّ دَعَا ثُمَّ قَالَ يَا عَائِشَةُ اشْعُرِي أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَفْتَانِي فِيمَا اسْتَفْتَيْتُهُ فِيهِ جَاءَنِي رَجُلَانِ فَقَعَدَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِي وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلِي فَقَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَ رَأْسِي لِلَّذِي عِنْدَ رِجْلِي أَوِ الَّذِي عِنْدَ رِجْلِي لِلَّذِي عِنْدَ رَأْسِي مَا وَجَعَ الرَّجُلُ قَالَ مَطْبُوبٌ قَالَ مَنْ طَبَّهُ قَالَ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ قَالَ فِي أَيِّ شَيْءٍ قَالَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاطَةٍ قَالَ وَجِبُّ طَلْعَةٍ ذَكَرَ قَالَ فَأَيْنَ هُوَ قَالَ فِي بَيْرٍ ذِي أَرْوَانَ قَالَتْ فَأَتَاهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي أَنْاسٍ مِنْ

أَصْحَابِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ يَا عَائِشَةُ وَاللَّهِ لَكَأَنَّ مَاءَهَا نَقَاعَةُ الْجِنِّ وَلَكَأَنَّ نَخْلَهَا رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ قَالَتْ فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا أَخْرَفْتَهُ قَالَ لَا أَمَّا أَنَا فَقَدْ عَافَانِي اللَّهُ وَكَرِهْتُ أَنْ أُثِيرَ عَلَى النَّاسِ شَرًّا فَأَمَرْتُ بِهَا فَدُفِنَتْ

“Aisha narrated that a Jew from among the Jews of Banu Zuraiq who was called Labid Bin al-A’sam cast a spell upon the Messenger of Allah with the result that he (under the influence of the spell) felt that he had been doing something whereas, in fact, he had not been doing that. (This state of affairs lasted) Until one day or during one night the Messenger of Allah made supplication (to dispel its effects). He again supplicated, and he again did this and said to ‘Aisha: ‘Do you know that Allah has told me what I had asked Him? There came to me two men and one amongst them sat near my head and the other one near my feet, and he who sat near my head said to one who sat near my feet or one who sat near my feet said to one who sat near my head: ‘What is the trouble with the man?’ He replied: The spell has affected him. He asked: ‘Who has cast that? He replied: ‘It was Labid Bin al-A’sam.’ He asked: ‘What is the thing by which he transmitted its effect?’ He replied: ‘By the comb and by the hair stuck to the comb and the spathe of the date-palm.’ He said: ‘Where is that?’ He replied: ‘In the well of Dharwan.’ She then said that the Messenger of Allah sent some of the persons from among his Companions there and he then said: “Aisha, by Allah, its water was yellow like henna and its trees were like heads of the devils.’ She said that she asked the Messenger of Allah as to why he did not burn it. He said: ‘No, Allah has cured me, and I do not like that I should induce people to commit any high-handedness in regard (to one another), but I only commanded that it should be buried.’” (Muslim)

Chain of narration 8: Abu Karayb, Muhammad Bin al-‘Ala – Muhammad Bin ‘Abdullah Bin Numayr (Kufah) – Hisham Bin ‘Urwah – ‘Aisha Bint Abi Bakr

أَخْبَرَنَا عَفَّانُ ، أَخْبَرَنَا وَهْبٌ ، أَخْبَرَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ عُرْوَةَ ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَجَرَ لَهُ حَتَّى كَانَ يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَصْنَعُ الشَّيْءَ وَلَمْ يَصْنَعْهُ ، حَتَّى إِذَا كَانَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ رَأَيْتُهُ يَدْعُو ، فَقَالَ أَشْعَرْتُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَفْتَانِي فِيمَا اسْتَفْتَيْتُهُ؟ أَتَانِي رَجُلَانِ فَقَعَدَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِي وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلِي ، فَقَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا مَا وَجَعَ الرَّجُلُ؟ فَقَالَ الْآخَرُ مَطْبُوبٌ ، فَقَالَ مَنْ طَبَّهُ

؟ فَقَالَ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ ، قَالَ فِيمَ؟ قَالَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاطَةٍ وَجُبِّ طَلْعَةٍ ذَكَرَ! قَالَ فَأَيْنَ هُوَ؟
قَالَ فِي ذِي ذَرَوَانَ ، قَالَ فَاَنْطَلَقَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، فَلَمَّا رَجَعَ أَخْبَرَ عَائِشَةَ ،
فَقَالَ كَانَ نَخْلَهَا رُغُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَكَانَ مَاءُهَا نِقَاعَةُ الْجِنِّاءِ ، فَقُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَأَخْرِجْهُ لِلنَّاسِ
، قَالَ أَمَّا اللَّهُ فَقَدْ شَفَانِي ، وَخَشِيتُ أَنْ أُتَوَّرَ عَلَى النَّاسِ مِنْهُ شَرًّا

“Aisha narrated that the Messenger of Allah was bewitched to the extent that he imagined doing something which he wasn't, until the day he was granted what he had asked for, he said: ‘Do you know, Allah has granted me what I asked for? Two men came to me, one of them sat near my head and the other near my feet. Then one of them asked the other: ‘What is wrong with this man?’ The other replied: ‘Bewitched.’ He asked: ‘Who bewitched him?’ He replied: ‘Labid Bin al-A’sam.’ He asked: ‘With what?’ ... He said: ‘Where is it?’ He said: ‘In the well of Dharwan.’ He said: ‘So he went there and when he returned he informed ‘Aisha and said: ‘Its branches were like the head of devils, and its water the color of Henna.’ I asked: ‘O Messenger of Allah, didn’t you show it to people?’ He replied: ‘Allah has cured me, and I feared to spread evil among people.’” (Tabaqat al-Kubra Ibn Sad)

Chain of narration 9: ‘Affan – Wuhayb (Basrah) – Hisham Bin ‘Urwah
– ‘Urwah – ‘Aishah

حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ ابْنَ عُيَيْنَةَ، يَقُولُ أَوَّلُ مَنْ حَدَّثَنَا بِهِ ابْنُ جُرَيْجٍ، يَقُولُ
حَدَّثَنِي آلُ، عُرْوَةَ عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، فَسَأَلْتُ هِشَامًا عَنْهُ فَحَدَّثَنَا عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ كَانَ رَسُولُ
اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَجَرَ حَتَّى كَانَ يَرَى أَنَّهُ يَأْتِي النِّسَاءَ وَلَا يَأْتِيَهُنَّ قَالَ سَفِيَانُ
وَهَذَا أَشَدُّ مَا يَكُونُ مِنَ السَّحَرِ إِذَا كَانَ كَذَا فَقَالَ يَا عَائِشَةُ أَعْلِمْتِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَفْتَانِي فِيمَا
اسْتَفْتَيْتُهُ فِيهِ، أَتَانِي رَجُلَانِ فَقَعَدَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِي، وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلِي، فَقَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَ
رَأْسِي لِلْآخَرِ مَا بَالَ الرَّجُلِ قَالَ مَطْبُوبٌ قَالَ وَمَنْ طَبَّهَ قَالَ لَبِيدُ بْنُ الْأَعْصَمِ، رَجُلٌ مِنْ بَنِي زُرَيْقٍ
خَلِيفٌ لِيَهُودَ، كَانَ مُتَافِقًا قَالَ وَفِيمَ قَالَ فِي مُشْطٍ وَمُشَاطَةٍ قَالَ وَأَيْنَ قَالَ فِي جُفِّ طَلْعَةٍ ذَكَرَ،
تَحْتَ رَعُوفَةٍ، فِي بئرِ ذَرَوَانَ قَالَتْ فَأَتَى النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْبِئْرَ حَتَّى اسْتَخْرَجَهُ فَقَالَ
هَذِهِ الْبِئْرُ الَّتِي أُرِيْتُهَا، وَكَانَ مَاءُهَا نِقَاعَةُ الْجِنِّاءِ، وَكَانَ نَخْلَهَا رُغُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ قَالَ فَاسْتَخْرَجَهُ
قَالَتْ فَقُلْتُ أَفَلَا أَيْ تَنْشُرَتْ فَقَالَ أَمَّا وَاللَّهِ فَقَدْ شَفَانِي، وَأَكْرَهُ أَنْ أُثِيرَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ
شَرًّا

“Aisha narrated that magic was worked on the Messenger of Allah so that he used to think that he had sexual relations with his wives while he actually had not (Sufyan said: This is the hardest kind of magic, as it has such an effect). Then one day, he said: ‘O ‘Aisha do you know that Allah has instructed me concerning the matter, I asked Him about? Two men came to me, and one of them sat near my head, and the other sat near my feet. The one near my head asked the other: ‘What is wrong with this man?’ The latter replied: ‘He is under the effect of magic.’ The first one asked: ‘Who has worked magic on him?’ The other replied: ‘Labid Bin al-A’sam, a man from Bani Zuraiq who was an ally of the Jews and was a hypocrite.’ The first one asked: ‘What material did he use?’ The other replied: ‘A comb and the hair stuck to it.’ The first one asked: ‘Where (is it)?’ The other replied: ‘In a skin of pollen of a male date-palm tree, kept under a stone in the well of Dharwan.’ So, the Prophet went to that well and took out those things and said: ‘That was the well which was shown to me (in a dream). Its water looked like the infusion of Henna leaves, and its date-palm trees looked like the heads of devils.’ The Prophet added: ‘Then that thing was taken out’ I asked: ‘Why do you not treat yourself with Nashra?’ He said: ‘Allah has cured me; I dislike to let evil spread among my people.’” (al-Bukhari)

Chain of narration 10: ‘Abdullah Bin Muhammad – Sufyan Bin ‘Uyaynah – Ibn Jurayj – Hisham Bin ‘Urwah – ‘Urwah – ‘Aishah

These chains of narration can be summarized as: Hisham Bin ‘Urwah – his father, ‘Urwah – ‘Aisha.

This is due to the numerous chains of narrations lead back to Hisham (Yahya, ‘Isa, Abu Usamah, Ibn Numayr, etc.), so we can with a certain level of confidence accept that he narrated the story, whereas there is only one chain from Hisham; the one between him and ‘Urwah (his father). It is therefore impossible to verify, that he actually heard this story from his father, ‘Urwah, as he is the only one who ascribes it to him. If we should accept it regardless, then we still can’t verify that ‘Urwah heard the story from ‘Aishah, as he is the only one who allegedly heard it from ‘Aishah.

Hisham lived in Madinah and moved to Iraq later on. Imam Malik also lived in Madinah and narrated many narrations from him, but he didn’t

narrate this one. Accordingly, when Hisham lived in Madinah, then Imam Malik either didn't know the story, or he didn't regard it as reliable. Imam Malik could easily have heard it from the others whom Hisham, allegedly, narrated it to, if he really did relate it to others in Madinah.

This can be explained by the fact that some scholars described that Hisham's memory became weak when he got old. Adh-Dhahabi, who speaks very highly about Hisham, wrote that it was said about Hisham, in *Mizan*, vol 4:

في الكبر تناقص حفظه

"When he got old, his memory deteriorated."

Also, adh-Dhahabi quotes Abdur Rahman Bin Khirash saying that Imam Malik didn't accept Hisham's narration after he moved to Iraq:

وكذا قول عبد الرحمن بن خراش: كان مالك لا يرضاه، نقم عليه حديثه لأهل العراق

"Malik wasn't satisfied with him. He rejected his narrations through the people of Iraq."

In *Siyar al-A'lam* adh-Dhahabi writes that Ya'qub Bin Shibah said that Hisham's narrations weren't rejected before Hisham moved to Iraq:

وقال يعقوب بن شيبه هشام ثبت لم ينكر عليه الا بعد ما صار الى العراق فإنه انبسط في الرواية وارسل عن ابيه اشياء مما كان قد سمعه من غير ابيه عن ابيه

"None of his narrations were rejected until he moved to Iraq where he spread narrations. He ascribed to his father amongst which there were things, he had heard from others than his father."

It seems like Hisham heard this narration while he was young from unreliable narrators, and when he got older, he mistakenly ascribed it to his father, 'Urwah. This would explain why nobody else narrated the story from 'Urwah.

This means the chain of narration is singular, as it's singular between Hisham Bin 'Urwah and 'Urwah Bin Zubayr, and the narration should be rejected, as Hisham narrated it in Iraq, and his narrations from Iraq were rightfully rejected.

Ibrahim Bin Musa was from ar-Ray in Iraq according to *Thiqat Ibn Hibban*, vol 8.

'Abdullah Bin Numayr was from Kufa in Iraq according to *Thiqat Ibn Hibban*, vol 9; *Tarikh ul-Kabir* by al-Bukhari, bind 1; *Tabaqat Ibn Sad*, vol 6; *Siyar A'lam* by adh-Dhahabi vol 11, and *Tabdheeb at-Tabdheeb* by Ibn Hajar, vol 9.

Yahya was from Basrah according to *Thiqat Ibn Hibban*, vol 7; *Tarikh ul-Kabir* by al-Bukhari, vol 8, and *Siyar A'lam* by adh-Dhahabi, bind 9.

Abu Usamah was from Kufa according to *Thiqat Ibn Hibban*, vol 6; *Tarikh ul-Kabir* by al-Bukhari, vol 3; *Tabaqat Ibn Sad*, vol 6, and *Siyar A'lam* by adh-Dhahabi, vol 9.

'Isa Bin Yunus was from Kufa according to *Thiqat Ibn Hibban*, vol 7; al-Bukharis *Tarikh ul-Kabir*, vol 6; *Tabaqat Ibn Sad*, vol 7; *Siyar a'lam*, vol 8, and *Lisan al-Mizan* by Ibn Hajar, vol 7.

Wuhayb was from Basrah according to *Thiqat Ibn Hibban*, vol 9. Sufyan Bin 'Uyaynah was from Kufa and moved to Mecca according to *Thiqat Ibn Hibban*, vol 6; *Tarikh ul-Kabir* al-Bukhari, vol 4; *Tabaqat Ibn Sad*, vol 5; *Siyar A'lam* by adh-Dhahabi, vol 8, and *Lisan al-Mizan* by Ibn Hajar, vol 4.

Ibrahim Bin Mundhir and Abu Damrah were both from Madinah, and Jurayj was from Mecca.

Sufyan Bin 'Uyaynah is the only one who, allegedly, heard the story from Ibn Jurayj, and conversely Sufyan Bin 'Uyaynah was the only person in all of Mecca to whom Ibn Jurayj narrates this story. I.e., of the entire population in Mecca, he, allegedly, chooses to solely tell the story to someone who moved to Mecca and doesn't narrate it to anyone else in Mecca. Sufyan Bin 'Uyaynah is the most learned teacher that Ibrahim Bin Mundhir studies under. And Ibrahim Bin Mundhir is the only one who, allegedly, hears the story from Abu Damrah, who is the only one who hears the story from Hisham out of the entire population of Madinah.

The chain of narration that includes Ibn Jurayj depends on Sufyan Bin 'Uyaynah along with a remark that the first time Sufyan heard this narration was through Ibn Jurayj.

'Abdullah Bin Muhammad – Sufyan Bin 'Uyaynah – Ibn Jurayj – Hisham Bin 'Urwah – 'Urwah – 'Aishah

However, there is another chain of narration, where he hears the story from Hisham Bin 'Urwah.

Hisham moves from Madinah to Irak, and Sufyan moves from Kufa to Mecca which means that either Sufyan heard the story from Hisham in Iraq, or he heard it from him after moving to Mecca, before Hisham moved to Iraq.

The seriousness of the matter taken into account, that the Prophet ﷺ, allegedly, was influenced by magic, it doesn't make any sense that Hisham only tells two people in all of Mecca and Madinah and doesn't tell his student, Imam Malik, the story. Sufyan has relations with the two others who, allegedly, hears the story, after which Hisham moves to Iraq and narrates the story to 8 people. If we take into account, that Ibn Jurayj and Abu Damrah each only relate the story to 1 person, then it becomes even more unlikely. Based on the principle that significant events naturally have many narrators narrating about them invalidates this explanation, and it should, therefore, be rejected.

The alternative after summing it all up is: Some people invented this story, but nobody in Mecca nor Madinah accepted it. Hisham grew old, got a bad memory, and moved to Iraq where he confused the story as a narration from his father, 'Urwah. In Iraq, he spread the story, believing it was a narration from his father, and Sufyan moved to Mecca after hearing the story from Hisham in Iraq. Sufyan narrates the tale to Ibrahim Bin Mundhir, who is categorized as *saduq*, i.e., truthful but makes mistakes, who ascribed the story to Abu Damrah. Sufyan or 'Abdullah, mistakenly, attributed the story to Ibn Jurayj as an additional link in the chain between Sufyan and Hisham at odds with the other chain of narration where Sufyan himself hears the tale from Hisham. Thus, it's not justified to accept this story.

The other category of chains of narration are singular from the beginning to the end; each of them includes at least one problematic narrator:

أَخْبَرَنَا هَنَّادُ بْنُ السَّرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنِ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنِ ابْنِ حَيَّانَ، - يَعْنِي يَزِيدَ - عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ أَرْقَمَ، قَالَ سَحَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْيَهُودِ فَاشْتَكَى لِذَلِكَ أَيَّامًا فَأَتَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَالَ إِنَّ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْيَهُودِ سَحَرَكَ عَقَدَ لَكَ عُقْدًا فِي بَطْنِ كَذَا وَكَذَا فَأَرْسَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَاسْتَخْرَجُوهَا فَجِئَ بِهَا فَقَامَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَأَنَّمَا نُشِطَ مِنْ عِقَالٍ فَمَا ذَكَرَ ذَلِكَ لِذَلِكَ الْيَهُودِيِّ وَلَا رَأَى فِي وَجْهِهِ قَطُّ

“Zaid Bin Arqam said: ‘A Jewish man bewitched the Prophet, and he got ill due to it for several days. Then Jibril came to him and said: ‘A Jewish man has bewitched you. In such and such well, there is a knot, he tied for you.’ The Messenger of Allah sent them to go and take it out and bring it to him. Then the Messenger of Allah stood up as if he was released from being tied. Nothing was mentioned to the Jews, and he didn’t see anything of it on his face.” (an-Nasa’i, Ahmad & at-Tabarani)

The common link for the narration in the three collections, *Sunan an-Nasa’i*, *Musnad Ahmad*, and *al-Mu’jam al-Kabir*, is the following chain: Abu Mu’awiyah – al-A’mash – Yazid Bin Hayyan – Zayd Bin Arqam

This chain is singular, and there aren’t any corroborating narrators for any of the links. We only have Abu Mu’awiyah’s word for al-A’mash narrating the story, and the same applies to the two other links in the chain of narration; Yazid Bin Hayyan and Zayd Bin Arqam.

Al-A’mash was from Kufa according to *Tabaqat Ibn Sad*, vol 6; *Siyar A’lam* by adh-Dhahabi, vol 6; *Lisan al-Mizān* by Ibn Hajar, vol 7; *Tahdhib at-Tahdhib* by Ibn Hajar, vol 4; *Mizān* by adh-Dhahabi, vol 2.

In *Mizān* vol 2, adh-Dhahabi writes about al-A’mash:

وهو يدلّس ، وربما دلّس عن ضعيف ، ولا يدرى به ، فمتى قال (حدثنا) فلا كلام ، ومتى قال (عن) تطرق إلى احتمال التدليس إلا في شيوخ له أكثر عنهم كإبراهيم ، وابن أبي وائل ،

وأبى صالح السمان ، فإن روايته عن هذا الصنف محمولة على الاتصال قال ابن المديني:
الاعمش كان كثير الوهم في أحاديث هؤلاء الضعفاء

“He confused whom he heard narrations from, and he might narrate from weak narrators without knowing it. So when he employed the word حدثنا (narrated to us) there is no problem, whereas when he employed the word عن (from) then it might indicate confusion (at-tadlis), except in the case of narrations from one of his many teachers such as Ibrahim, Ibn Abi Wa'il, and Abi Salih as-Saman. So, when he narrates from this category, the chain is connected. Ibn al-Madini said: 'Al-A'mash was confused about many narrations from these weak narrators.'”

Ibn Hajar explains in *at-Talkhis*, vol 3 question 1183 that a narration which Ibn Qittan categorized as *sahih* is problematic because al-A'mash confuses narrators:

وعندي أن إسناد الحديث الذي صححه ابن القطان معلول ، لأنه لا يلزم من كون رجاله ثقات
أن يكون صحيحا ، لأن الأعمش مدلس ولم يذكر سماعه من عطاء

“For us the chain of narration of this narration which Ibn Qittan has categorized as *sahih* problematic, because the narrators included in it can't be determined as trustworthy and the narration as *sahih*, due to al-A'mash confuses narrators, and he didn't mention (with conclusive words) that he had heard the narration from 'Ata.”

In the chain of narration including al-A'mash and Yazid regarding the story about the Prophet ﷺ being influenced by magic, the word حدثنا is not used which weakens the narration further than its chain of narration is entirely singular, which is why it should be rejected.

The following are various problematic narrations from *Tabaqat al-Kabir* by Ibn Sa'd, vol 2:

أَخْبَرَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ دَاوُدَ ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ لَهْيَعَةَ ، عَنْ عَمْرِو مَوْلَى غُفْرَةَ ، أَنَّ لَبِيدَ بْنَ الْأَعْصَمِ
الْيَهُودِيَّ سَحَرَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى التَّبَسَّ بِصَرُّهُ ، وَعَادَهُ أَصْحَابُهُ ، ثُمَّ إِنَّ جَبْرِيلَ
عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَمِيكَائِيلَ أَخْبَرَاهُ ، فَأَخَذَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، فَأَعْتَرَفَ فَاسْتَخْرَجَ السَّحَرَ

مِنَ الْجُبِّ مِنْ تَحْتِ الْبَيْتِ ، ثُمَّ نَزَعَهُ فَحَلَّهُ ، فَكُشِفَ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، وَعَفَا عَنْهُ

“Umar Mawla Ghufrah narrated that the Jew, Labid Bin al-A'sam, bewitched the Prophet ﷺ so that he lost his sight. Then Jibril and Mika'eel informed him about it, and the Prophet ﷺ took it, and he (Labid) admitted having practiced magic, and then he ﷺ removed the magic from the spathe in the well, then he destroyed it and defeated it. Then it became clear to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he forgave him” (Tabaqat al-Kabir Ibn Sad)

Chain of narration 1: Musa Bin Dawud – Ibn Lahi'ah – 'Umar mawla Ghufrah

'Abdullah Ibn Lahi'ah is weak according to *Sunan at-Tirmidhi*, vol 1; *Ma'rifa as-Sunan wal-Atbar* by al-Baihaqi, vol 4; *Tahdbee*, vol 5; *ad-Du'afa' wal-Matrukin*, vol 2, and *Tabaqat Ibn Sad*, vol 7.

'Umar Mawla Ghufrah was categorized as weak by an-Nasa'i according to *al-Kamil* by Ibn 'Udays and *Tahdbee* by Ibn Hajar.

أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عُمَرَ ، حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو مَرْوَانَ ، عَنْ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ، عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْحَكَمِ ، قَالَ : لَمَّا رَجَعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنَ الْحُدَيْبِيَّةِ فِي ذِي الْحِجَّةِ وَدَخَلَ الْمَحْرَمَ جَاءَتْهُ رُؤَسَاءُ يَهُودَ الَّذِينَ بَقُوا بِالْمَدِينَةِ مِمَّنْ يُظْهِرُ الْإِسْلَامَ وَهُوَ مُتَأَفِّقٌ إِلَى لَبِيدِ بْنِ الْأَعْصَمِ الْيَهُودِيِّ وَكَانَ خَلِيفًا فِي بَيْتِ زُرَيْقٍ ، وَكَانَ سَاجِرًا ، قَدْ عَلِمَتْ ذَلِكَ يَهُودُ أَنَّهُ أَعْلَمُهُمْ بِالسَّحْرِ وَبِالسَّمُومِ ، فَقَالُوا لَهُ : يَا أَبَا الْأَعْصَمِ ، أَنْتَ أَسْحَرْنَا مِنَّا ، وَقَدْ سَحَرْنَا مُحَمَّدًا فَسَحَرَهُ مِنَّا الرَّجُلُ وَالنِّسَاءُ فَلَمْ نَصْنَعْ شَيْئًا ، وَأَنْتَ تَرَى أَثَرَهُ فِيْنَا ، وَخِلَافَهُ دِينَنَا ، وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مِنَّا وَأَجْلَى ، وَنَحْنُ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ جُعْلًا عَلَى أَنْ تَسْحَرَهُ لَنَا سِحْرًا يَنْكُوهُ ، فَجَعَلُوا لَهُ ثَلَاثَةَ دَنَائِرَ عَلَى أَنْ يَسْحَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، فَعَمِدَ إِلَى مُشْطٍ وَمَا يُمَشِّطُ مِنَ الرَّأْسِ مِنَ الشَّعْرِ ، فَعَقَدَ فِيهِ عُقْدًا ، وَتَفَلَّ فِيهِ تَفْلًا ، وَجَعَلَهُ فِي جَبِّ طَلْعَةٍ ذَكَرَ ، ثُمَّ انْتَهَى بِهِ حَتَّى جَعَلَهُ تَحْتَ أَرْغُوفَةِ الْبَيْتِ ، فَوَجَدَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَمْرًا أَنْكَرَهُ ، حَتَّى يُخَيَّلُ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ الشَّيْءَ وَلَا يَفْعَلُهُ ، وَأَنْكَرَ بَصَرَهُ حَتَّى دَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ فَدَعَا جُبَيْرَ بْنَ إِبْنِ أَبِي الرُّزَيْقِ وَقَدْ شَهِدَ بَدْرًا فَدَلَّهُ عَلَى مَوْضِعٍ فِي بَيْتِ ذُرْوَانَ تَحْتَ أَرْغُوفَةِ الْبَيْتِ ، فَخَرَجَ جُبَيْرٌ حَتَّى اسْتَحْرَجَهُ ، ثُمَّ أَرْسَلَ إِلَى لَبِيدِ بْنِ الْأَعْصَمِ ، فَقَالَ مَا حَمَلَكَ عَلَى مَا صَنَعْتَ ، فَقَدْ دَلَّنِي اللَّهُ عَلَى سِحْرِكَ ، وَأَخْبَرَنِي مَا

صَنَعَتْ ، قَالَ حُبُّ الدَّنَائِيرِ يَا أَبَا الْقَاسِمِ! قَالَ إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ: فَأَخْبَرْتُ عَبْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ كَعْبٍ بْنَ مَالِكٍ بِهَذَا الْحَدِيثِ ، فَقَالَ إِنَّمَا سَحَرَهُ بَنَاتُ أُعْصَمَ أَخَوَاتُ لَبِيدٍ ، وَكَانَ أَسْحَرُ مِنْ لَبِيدٍ وَأَخْبَثَ ، وَكَانَ لَبِيدٌ هُوَ الَّذِي ذَهَبَ بِهِ فَأَدْخَلَهُ تَحْتَ أَرْغُوفَةِ الْبَيْتِ فَلَمَّا عَقَدُوا تِلْكَ الْعَقْدَ أَنْكَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، تِلْكَ السَّاعَةَ بَصَرُهُ وَدَسَّ بَنَاتُ أُعْصَمَ إِحْدَاهُنَّ فَدَخَلَتْ عَلَى عَائِشَةَ فَخَبَّرَتْهَا عَائِشَةُ أَوْ سَمِعَتْ عَائِشَةَ تَذْكُرُ مَا أَنْكَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، مِنْ بَصَرِهِ ثُمَّ خَرَجَتْ إِلَى أَخَوَاتِهَا وَإِلَى لَبِيدٍ فَأَخْبَرَتْهُنَّ ، فَقَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ إِنْ يَكُنْ نَبِيًّا فَسَيُخْبِرُ ، وَإِنْ يَكُ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَسَوْفَ يُدْلِيهِ هَذَا السَّحَرُ حَتَّى يُذْهَبَ عَقْلُهُ ، فَيَكُونُ بِمِثَالِ مَنْ قَوْمَنَا وَأَهْلِي دِينِنَا ، فَدَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ ، قَالَ الْحَارِثُ بْنُ قَيْسٍ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، أَلَا تَهْوَرُ الْبَيْتُ؟ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، فَهَوَرَهَا الْحَارِثُ بْنُ قَيْسٍ وَأَصْحَابُهُ وَكَانَ يُسْتَعْدَبُ مِنْهَا ، قَالَ: وَحَفَرُوا بَيْتًا أُخْرَى فَأَغَانَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَى حَفْرِهَا حِينَ هَوَرُوا الْأُخْرَى الَّتِي سَحَرَ فِيهَا حَتَّى أَتْبَطُوا مَاءَهَا ، ثُمَّ تَهَوَّرَتْ بَعْدُ وَيُقَالُ إِنَّ الَّذِي اسْتَخْرَجَ السَّحَرَ بِأَمْرِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَيْسُ بْنُ مَخْصَنٍ

“Umar Bin al-Hakam narrated that when the Messenger of Allah returned from al-Hudaybiyah in dhi il-Hijjah before the beginning of al-Muharram, the leaders of the Jews who were still in Madinah amongst whom some of them displayed Islam but were hypocrites, came to the Jew Labid Bin al-A’sam, who was an ally of Bani Zurayq, and he was a sorcerer. It was well-known that this Jew was the most well versed among them in magic and poisons, so they said to him: ‘O Aba al-A’sab, you are the craftiest sorcerer amongst us, and we wish to bewitch Muhammad. A man and a woman amongst us tried to bewitch him, but nothing happened, and you’ve seen how he influences us and fights our religion. He fought us and drove us out, and we shall make it tempting to you to bewitch him for us so that he is destroyed.’ They gave him 3 dinars as payment for bewitching the Messenger of Allah. He took hairs from his comb and tied them to a knot and spate on it, and he put it into some spathe. When he was done, he placed it on the bottom of a well under a stone. So, then the Messenger of Allah was effected, and he began to imagine that he was doing something which he wasn’t. And his eyesight failed until Allah revealed it to him, so he sent for Jubayr Bin Iyas az-Zuraqiyyu, and he arrived quickly, and then he was informed about the event in the well of Dharwan under the stone. Jubayr went until he took it out. Then he ﷺ sent it to Labid Bin al-A’sam and said: ‘What made you do it? Allah has revealed to me about your magic and what you did.’ He replied: ‘Love of Dinars, O

Aba al-Qasim! Abu Ishaq Bin 'Abdullah said: "Abdur Rahman Bin Ka'b Bin Malik narrated this story to me. He said: 'It was the daughters of al-A'sams, i.e., the sisters of Labid who bewitched him, and their magic was stronger and fouler than Labid's magic. Labid was the one who placed it under the stone in the well, and when they tied this knot, the eyesight of the Messenger of Allah was affected. One of the sisters of Labid conspired, so she came to 'Aisha. And 'Aisha informed her about it, or she heard 'Aisha mention how the Messenger of Allah had been affected, i.e., his eyesight. Then she went to her sisters and Labid and informed them, and one of them said: 'If he is a Prophet, he will be informed, and if he isn't, then the magic will work until he loses his mind, which shall be a victory for our people and our religion. Then Allah ﷻ revealed it to him.' Al-Harith Bin Qays asked: 'Should we destroy the well?' The Messenger of Allah turned away from him. So, al-Harith Bin Qays and his companions destroyed the well, and he was pleased. And they dug another well, as instructed by the Messenger of Allah, while they were destroying the other until the water was gone, and then they destroyed it. And it is said, that the one who extracted the magic on the command of the Messenger of Allah was Qays Bin Mihsan.'" (Tabaqat al-Kabir Ibn Sad)

Chain of narration 2: Muhammad Bin 'Umar – Abu Marwan – Ishaq Bin 'Abdullah – 'Umar Bin al-Hakam

أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عُمَرَ ، حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ ، عَنِ ابْنِ الْمُسَيَّبِ ، وَعُرْوَةَ
بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ ، قَالَا فَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: سَحَرْتَنِي يَهُودِيٌّ مِنْ بَنِي زُرَّاقٍ
"Ibn Musayyib and 'Urwah Bin az-Zubayr narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say: 'I was bewitched by a Jew from Bani Zuraiq.'" (Tabaqat al-Kabir Ibn Sad)

Chain of narration 3: Muhammad Bin 'Umar – Muhammad Bin 'Abdullah – az-Zuhri – Ibn Musayyib & 'Urwah Bin Zubayr

أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عُمَرَ ، حَدَّثَنِي ابْنُ جُرَيْجٍ ، عَنْ عَطَاءٍ ، قَالَ: وَحَدَّثَنِي ابْنُ أَبِي حَبِيبَةَ ، عَنْ
دَاوُدَ بْنِ الْحَصَنِ ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ: أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَفَا عَنْهُ ، قَالَ عِكْرِمَةُ: ثُمَّ
كَانَ يَرَاهُ بَعْدَ عَفْوِهِ فَيُعْرِضُ عَنْهُ

“Ikrimah narrated that the Messenger of Allah forgave him (Labid). Ikrimah said: Then after forgiving him, he used to see him and turn away from him.” (Tabaqat al-Kabir Ibn Sad)

Chain of narration 4: Muhammad Bin 'Umar – Ibn Juraij – 'Ata – Ibn Abi Habibah – Dawud Bin al-Husayn – 'Ikrimah

قَالَ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عُمَرَ : هَذَا أَثْبَتُ عِنْدَنَا مِمَّنْ رَوَى أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَتَلَهُ
 “Muhammad Bin 'Umar said: ‘This proves to us amongst what was narrated that the Messenger of Allah killed him.’” (Tabaqat al-Kabir Ibn Sad)

Muhammad Bin 'Umar al-Waqidi who is included in chains 2-4 and the last remark is categorized by scholars as weak, as one who narrated from unknown and rejected narrators according to *Tahdhib* by Ibn Hajar, vol 9 and *Siyar A'lam* by adh-Dhahabi, vol 9.

أَخْبَرَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ حَفْصٍ ، عَنْ جُوَيْرٍ ، عَنِ الضَّحَّاكِ ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ ، قَالَ مَرَضَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَخَذَ عَنِ النِّسَاءِ ، وَعَنِ الطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ ، فَهَبَطَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكَانِ وَهُوَ بَيْنَ النَّائِمِ وَالْيَقَظَانِ ، فَجَلَسَ أَحَدُهُمَا عِنْدَ رَأْسِهِ وَالْآخَرُ عِنْدَ رِجْلَيْهِ ، ثُمَّ قَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا لِصَاحِبِهِ: مَا شَكْوُهُ؟ قَالَ طُبٌّ ، يَغْنِي سَجَرَ ، قَالَ: وَمَنْ فَعَلَهُ؟ قَالَ: لَبِيدُ بْنُ أَعْصَمَ الْيَهُودِيُّ ، قَالَ فَبَيَّ أَيْ شَيْءٍ جَعَلَهُ؟ ، قَالَ فِي طَلْعَةٍ ، قَالَ فَأَيْنَ وَضَعَهَا؟ قَالَ فِي بَيْتٍ ذُرْوَانٍ تَحْتَ صَخْرَةٍ ، قَالَ فَمَا شِفَاؤُهُ؟ قَالَ تُنَزَّحُ الْبَيْتُ ، وَتُرْفَعُ الصَّخْرَةُ ، وَتُسْتَخْرَجُ الطَّلْعَةُ ، وَارْتَفَعَ الْمَلَكَانِ ، فَبَعَثَ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ وَعَمَارٍ فَأَمَرَهُمَا أَنْ يَأْتِيَا الرِّكْبِيَّ فَيُفْعَلَا الَّذِي سَمِعَ ، فَأَتِيَاهُ وَمَاؤُهَا كَأَنَّهُ قَدْ خُضِبَ بِالْحِنَاءِ ، فَتَرَحَّاهَا ثُمَّ رَفَعَا الصَّخْرَةَ فَأَخْرَجَا طَلْعَةً ، فَإِذَا بِهَا إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ عُقْدَةً ، وَنَزَلَتْ هَاتَانِ السُّورَتَانِ قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ وَ قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ، فَجَعَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كُلَّمَا قَرَأَ آيَةً انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ ، حَتَّى انْحَلَّتِ الْعُقْدُ وَانْتَشَرَ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِلنِّسَاءِ وَالطَّعَامِ وَالشَّرَابِ

“Ibn 'Abbas narrated that the Prophet ﷺ was ill, and he lost his appetite regarding women, food, and water. Then two angels came to him while he wasn't completely awake nor completely sleeping. One of them sat near his head, and the other near his feet. One of them asked the other: ‘What’s wrong with him?’ The other said: ‘Bewitched.’ The first one asked: ‘Who did it?’ The other one replied: ‘Labid Bin al-A'sam, the

Jew.' The first one asked: 'What did he use?' The other one replied: 'Spathe.' The first one asked: 'Where is it?' The other replied: 'In the well of Dharwan under a stone.' The first asked: 'What is the cure?' The other replied: 'Empty the well, lift the stone, and take out the spathe.' The angels flew away, and then the Prophet ﷺ sent 'Ali and 'Ammar ordering them to find the cure. They did, as they were told. When they came to the well, the water was colored green like Henna. They emptied the well, lifted the stone, and took the spathe out; it had 11 knots on it. And then the two chapters of the Qur'an were revealed; al-Falaq and an-Nas. Each time, the Prophet ﷺ recited a verse, a knot was opened. When the knots were open, the Prophet ﷺ regained his appetite for women, food, and water." (*Tabaqat al-Kabir* Ibn Sad)

Chain of narration 5: 'Umar Bin Hafs – Juwaybir – ad-Dahhak – Ibn 'Abbas

Juwaybar is declared weak according to *Tarikh ul-Kabir* by al-Bukhari, vol 2 and *Tahdheeb* by Ibn Hajar, vol 2, and his narrations are rejected (matruk) according to Mizaan by adh-Dhahabi, vol 1.

أَخْبَرَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ ، أَخْبَرَنَا سُفْيَانُ الثَّوْرِيُّ ، عَنِ الْأَعْمَشِ ، عَنْ ثُمَامَةَ الْمُحَلَّبِيِّ ، عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ أَرْقَمَ ، قَالَ عَقَدَ رَجُلٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ ، يُعْنِي لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عُقْدًا وَكَانَ يَأْمَنُهُ وَرَمَى بِهِ فِي بَيْتٍ كَذَا وَكَذَا ، فَجَاءَ الْمَلَكَانِ يُغَوِّدَانِهِ فَقَالَ أَحَدُهُمَا لِصَاحِبِهِ تَدْرِي مَا بِهِ؟ عَقَدَ لَهُ فَلَانَ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ وَرَمَى بِهِ فِي بَيْتٍ كَذَا وَكَذَا ، وَلَوْ أَخْرَجَهُ لَعُوفِي ، فَبِعِثُوا إِلَى الْبَيْتِ فَوَجَدُوا الْمَاءَ قَدِ اخْضَرَ ، فَأَخْرَجُوهُ ، فَرَمَوْا بِهِ ، فَعُوفِيَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، فَمَا حَدَّثَ بِهِ ، وَلَا رُئِيَ فِي وَجْهِهِ

"Zaid Bin Arqam narrated that a man from al-Ansar tied a knot, i.e., for the Prophet ﷺ, and he was satisfied with it and threw it in this well, then two angels came. One of them said to the other: 'Do you know what's wrong with him? This person from al-Ansar tied a knot and threw it in this well, and should it be taken out; he shall recover.' Then they were sent to the well and saw that the water was green, and they took out the knot and untied it, then the Prophet ﷺ recovered, and he wasn't informed about it, and nobody saw him." (*Tabaqat al-Kabir* Ibn Sad)

Chain of narration 6: Musa Bin Mas'ud – Sufyan ath-Thawri – al-A'mash – Thumamah al-Muhallami – Zayd Bin Arqam

See the point as mentioned earlier regarding al-A'mash, the same applies here.

أَخْبَرَنَا عَتَّابُ بْنُ زِيَادٍ ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الْمُبَارَكِ ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنَا يُونُسُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ فِي سَاجِرِ أَهْلِ الْعَهْدِ ، قَالَ لَا يُقْتَلُ ، قَدْ سَحَرَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ فَلَمْ يَقْتُلْهُ

“Az-Zuhri said regarding the magician: ‘He was not killed. The Prophet ﷺ was bewitched by a man from amongst the People of the Book, and he did not kill him.’” (*Tabaqat al-Kabir* Ibn Sad)

Chain of narration 7: ‘Attab Bin Ziyad – ‘Abdullah Bin al-Mubarak – Yunus Bin Yazid – az-Zuhri

This chain of narration doesn't lead back to the Prophet ﷺ, as az-Zuhri was from the fourth generation, so he didn't meet the Prophet ﷺ or his companions.

The conclusion is that this story should be rejected as a fabrication, as all the narrators in the chains of narration are problematic.

The combination of Jinn & magic

Some Muslims realize the irrational part of employing magic as an explanation when one can't point out the causal relationship in phenomena and events, but they avoid this problem by combining the idea of Jinn with the idea of magic. They explain that magic occurs when someone makes a Jinn work for him, and thus, they avoid many of the intellectual problems with the idea of magic. By doing so, they initially make an irrational and unprovable idea seem rational and provable, as the concept of the existence of Jinn can't be disputed due to conclusive texts which prove the existence of Jinn; both Koranic verses and narrations root the idea that Allah ﷻ created the creature Jinn.

Nothing indicates that human beings can cooperate with Jinn, contact them, or even talk to them. On the contrary, the Islamic texts suggest that nobody has power over Jinn, as the miracle and Kingdom of Sulaiman included control over Jinn and that they could influence things. However, that possibility doesn't exist anymore due to the prayer of Sulaiman to Allah ﷻ about that nobody after him should be given a Kingdom like his:

إِنَّ عِفْرِيثًا مِنَ الْجِنِّ تَفَلَّتْ عَلَى الْبَارِحَةِ - أَوْ كَلِمَةً نَحْوَهَا - لِيَقْطَعَ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ، فَأَمَكَّنِي اللَّهُ مِنْهُ، فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَرْبِطَهُ إِلَى سَارِيَةٍ مِنْ سَوَارِي الْمَسْجِدِ، حَتَّى تُصْبِحُوا وَتَنْظُرُوا إِلَيْهِ كُلُّكُمْ، فَذَكَرْتُ قَوْلَ أَخِي سُلَيْمَانَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مُلْكًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَخِي مِنْ بَعْدِي

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘An *Ifrit* from amongst the Jinn came to interrupt my prayer, but Allah enabled me to defeat him. I wished I could fasten him to one of the pillars of the mosque so that all of you could see him in the morning, but I remembered the prayer of my brother Sulaiman: ‘My Lord! Grant me a Kingdom the like of which shall not belong to anybody after me.’” (al-Bukhari)

This rules out the possibility of having power over Jinn, even for the Prophet ﷺ.

The neglected interpretation by al-Jassas

Abu Bakr al-Jassas wrote a long explanation about magic in his *tafsir* of the Qur'an titled *Abkam al-Qur'an* which a lot of people don't know about – it shall now be accessible for the first time in a European language. The explanation is pretty long, so quite a big amount of Arabic text follows:

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى { وَاتَّبِعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكٍ سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ } إِلَى آخِرِ الْقِصَّةِ

قَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ الْوَاجِبُ أَنْ نُقَدِّمَ الْقَوْلَ فِي السَّحْرِ لِخَفَائِهِ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ فَضَّلَا عَنْ الْعَامَّةِ ، ثُمَّ نَعْقِبُهُ بِالْكَلَامِ فِي حُكْمِهِ فِي مُقْتَضَى الْآيَةِ فِي الْمَعَانِي وَالْأَحْكَامِ ، فنَقُولُ إِنَّ أَهْلَ اللُّغَةِ يَذْكُرُونَ أَنَّ أَصْلَهُ فِي اللُّغَةِ لِمَا لَطَفَ وَخَفِيَ سَبَبُهُ ، وَالسَّحَرُ عِنْدَهُمْ بِالْفَتْحِ وَهُوَ الْغَدَاءُ لِخَفَائِهِ وَلَطَفِ مَجَارِيهِ قَالَ لَبِيدٌ أَرَانَا مَوْضِعَيْنِ لِأَمْرِ غَيْبٍ وَنُسَجَرُ بِالطَّعَامِ وَبِالشَّرَابِ قِيلَ فِيهِ وَجْهَانِ

نُعَلِّلُ وَنُخَدِّعُ كَالْمَسْخُورِ وَالْمَخْدُوعِ
وَالْآخِرُ نَعْدَى ، وَأَيُّ الْوَجْهَيْنِ كَانَ فَمَعْنَاهُ الْخَفَاءُ وَقَالَ آخِرُ فَإِنْ تَسَأَلْتَنَا فِيمَ نَحْنُ فَإِنَّا عَصَافِيرُ
مِنْ هَذَا الْأَنَامِ الْمُسْحَرِ وَهَذَا الْبَيْتُ يَحْتَمِلُ مِنَ الْمَعْنَى مَا احْتَمَلَهُ الْأَوَّلُ ، وَيَحْتَمِلُ أَيْضًا أَنَّهُ أَرَادَ
بِالْمُسْحَرِ أَنَّهُ ذُو سِحْرِ وَالسَّحَرُ الرَّثَّةُ وَمَا يَتَعَلَّقُ بِالْحُلُقُومِ ، وَهَذَا يَرْجِعُ إِلَى مَعْنَى الْخَفَاءِ

وَمِنْهُ قَوْلُ عَائِشَةَ: تُؤَفِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَ سَحْرِي وَنَحْرِي ، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى {
إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسْحَرِينَ} يَعْنِي مِنَ الْمَخْلُوقِ الَّذِي يُطْعَمُ وَيُسْقَى
وَيَذَلُّ عَلَيْهِ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى { وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا } وَكَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: { مَا لِي هَذَا الرَّسُولُ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ
وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ } وَيَحْتَمِلُ أَنَّهُ ذُو سِحْرِ مِثْلُنَا وَإِنَّمَا يَذْكُرُ السَّحْرَ فِي مِثْلِ هَذِهِ الْمَوَاضِعِ
لِضَعْفِ هَذِهِ الْأَجْسَادِ وَلَطَافَتِهَا وَرِقَّتِهَا وَبِهَا مَعَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامُ الْإِنْسَانِ ، فَمَنْ كَانَ يَهْدِيهِ الصِّفَّةُ فَهُوَ
ضَعِيفٌ مُحْتَاجٌ

وَهَذَا هُوَ مَعْنَى السَّحْرِ فِي اللَّغَةِ ، ثُمَّ نُقِلَ هَذَا الْإِسْمُ إِلَى كُلِّ أَمْرٍ خَفِيَ سَبَبُهُ وَتُخَيَّلَ عَلَى غَيْرِ
حَقِيقَتِهِ وَيَجْرِي مَجْرَى التَّمْوِيهِ وَالْجِدَاعِ ، وَمَتَى أُطْلِقَ وَلَمْ يُقَيَّدْ أَفَادَ ذَمًّا فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ قَدْ أُجْرِيَ مُقَيَّدًا
فِيمَا يُمْتَدَحُ وَيُحْمَدُ كَمَا رُوِيَ: { إِنَّ مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ لِسِحْرًا }

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْبَاقِي قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْحَرَّانِيُّ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا سَلِيمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ
بْنُ زَيْدٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الزُّبَيْرِ قَالَ: { قَدِمَ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الزُّبَيْرَانُ بْنُ بَدْرٍ
وَعُمَرُو بْنُ الْأَثَمِ وَقَيْسُ بْنُ عَاصِمٍ ، فَقَالَ لِعُمَرُو: خَبِّرْنِي عَنِ الزُّبَيْرَانِ فَقَالَ: مُطَاعٌ فِي نَادِيهِ ،
شَدِيدُ الْعَارِضَةِ مَا نَعِيَ لِمَا وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ فَقَالَ الزُّبَيْرَانُ: هُوَ وَاللَّهِ يَعْلَمُ أَنِّي أَفْضَلُ مِنْهُ فَقَالَ عُمَرُو: إِنَّهُ
زَيْمُ الْمُرُوءَةِ ضَيَّقَ الْعَطَشُ الْأَبَ لَيْمِ الْخَالِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَدَقْتَ فِيهِمَا أَرْضَانِي فَقُلْتُ
أَحْسَنُ مَا عَلِمْتُ ، وَأَسْخَطَنِي فَقُلْتُ أَسْوَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنَّ مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ لِسِحْرًا }

وَحَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْحَرَّانِيُّ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُصْعَبُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مَالِكُ بْنُ أَنَسٍ عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ
أَسْلَمَ عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ قَالَ: { قَدِمَ رَجُلَانِ فَخَطَبَا أَحَدُهُمَا فَعَجَبَ النَّاسُ لِذَلِكَ ، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: إِنَّ مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ لِسِحْرًا }

قَالَ: وَحَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بَكْرٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو دَاوُدَ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى بْنِ فَارِسٍ قَالَ:
حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو ثَمِيلَةَ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ التَّحَوِيُّ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ ثَابِتٍ
قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي صَخْرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ بُرَيْدَةَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

عليه وسلم يقول: { إِنَّ مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ لَسِحْرًا ، وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ جَهْلًا ، وَإِنَّ مِنَ الشَّعْرِ حِكْمًا ، وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ عِيَالًا }

قَالَ صَغَصَةُ بْنُ صُوحَانَ: صَدَقَ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ أَمَّا قَوْلُهُ: (إِنَّ مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ لَسِحْرًا) فَالرَّجُلُ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَهُوَ الْخَنُ بِالْحَجَجِ مِنْ صَاحِبِ الْحَقِّ فَيَسْحَرُ الْقَوْمَ بِبَيِّنَاتِهِ فَيَذْهَبُ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَمَّا قَوْلُهُ: (مِنَ الْعِلْمِ جَهْلًا) فَيَتَكَلَّفُ الْعَالِمُ إِلَى عِلْمِهِ مَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فَيُجْهَلُهُ ذَلِكَ وَأَمَّا قَوْلُهُ: (إِنَّ مِنَ الشَّعْرِ حِكْمًا) فَهِيَ هَذِهِ الْأَمْثَالُ وَالْمَوَاعِظُ الَّتِي يَنْعِظُ بِهَا النَّاسُ وَأَمَّا قَوْلُهُ: (إِنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ عِيَالًا) فَعَرَضْتُ كَلَامَكَ وَحَدِيثَكَ عَلَى مَنْ لَيْسَ مِنْ شَأْنِهِ وَلَا يُرِيدُهُ فَسَمَى النَّبِيُّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ بَعْضَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ سِحْرًا؛ لِأَنَّ صَاحِبَهُ يَبْنِي أَنَّ يُنْبِئَ عَنْ حَقٍّ فَيُوضِّحُهُ وَيُجَلِّيه بِحُسْنِ بَيِّنَاتِهِ بَعْدَ أَنْ كَانَ خَفِيًّا؛ فَهَذَا مِنَ السَّحْرِ الْخَلَالِ الَّذِي أَقَرَّ النَّبِيُّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَمَرُو بْنُ الْأَهْتَمِ عَلَيْهِ وَلَمْ يُسْخِطْهُ مِنْهُ

وَيَبْنِي أَنَّ يُصَوِّرَ الْبَاطِلَ فِي صُورَةِ الْحَقِّ بِبَيِّنَاتِهِ وَيَخْدَعُ السَّامِعِينَ بِتَمْوِيهِهِ وَمَتَى أُطْلِقَ فَهُوَ اسْمٌ لِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ مُمَوَّهٍ بَاطِلٍ لَا حَقِيقَةَ لَهُ وَلَا ثَبَاتَ ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: { سَحَرُوا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ } بِغَيْبِ مَوَهُوِّ عَلَيْهِمْ حَتَّى ظَنُّوا أَنَّ جِبَالَهُمْ وَعَصِيَّتَهُمْ تَسْعَى وَقَالَ: { يُخَيِّلُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ أَنَّهَا تَسْعَى } فَأَخْبَرَ أَنَّ مَا ظَنُّوه سَعْيًا مِنْهَا لَمْ يَكُنْ سَعْيًا وَإِنَّمَا كَانَ تَخْيِيلًا وَقَدْ قِيلَ: إِنَّهَا كَانَتْ عَصِيًّا مُجَوِّفَةً قَدْ مَلِئَتْ زُهْبًا ، وَكَذَلِكَ الْجِبَالُ كَانَتْ مَعْمُولَةً مِنْ أَدَمٍ مَحْشُوءَةً زُهْبًا ، وَقَدْ حَفَرُوا قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ تَحْتَ الْمَوَاضِعِ أَشْرَابًا وَجَعَلُوا آرَاجًا وَمَلَقَوْهَا نَارًا ، فَلَمَّا طُرِحَتْ عَلَيْهِ وَحِمِي الرَّثْبُ حَرَّكَهَا ؛ لِأَنَّ مِنْ شَأْنِ الرَّثْبِ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُ النَّارُ أَنْ يَطِيرَ ، فَأَخْبَرَ اللَّهُ أَنَّ ذَلِكَ كَانَ مُمَوَّهًا عَلَى غَيْرِ حَقِيقَتِهِ وَالْعَرَبُ تَقُولُ لَضَرْبٍ مِنَ الْخُلِيِّ مَسْحُورٍ أَيْ مُمَوَّهٍ عَلَى مَنْ رَأَاهُ مَسْحُورٌ بِهِ عَيْنُهُ فَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ عَلَى حَقٍّ وَيُوضِّحُهُ فَهُوَ مِنَ السَّحْرِ الْخَلَالِ ، وَمَا كَانَ مِنْهُ مَقْصُودًا بِهِ إِلَى تَمْوِيهِ وَخَدِيعَةٍ وَتَصْوِيرٍ بَاطِلٍ فِي صُورَةِ الْحَقِّ فَهُوَ مِنَ السَّحْرِ الْمَذْمُومِ

وَرَوَى أَنَّ رَجُلًا تَكَلَّمَ بِكَلَامٍ بَلِيغٍ عِنْدَ عُمَرَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ: هَذَا وَاللَّهِ السَّحْرُ الْخَلَالُ

فَإِنْ قِيلَ: إِذَا كَانَ مَوْضُوعُ السَّحْرِ التَّمْوِيهِ وَالْإِخْفَاءَ ؛ فَكَيْفَ يَجُوزُ أَنْ يُسَمَّى مَا يُوضِّحُ الْحَقَّ وَيُنْبِئُ عَنْهُ سِحْرًا ، وَهُوَ إِنَّمَا أَظْهَرَ بِذَلِكَ مَا خَفِيَ وَلَمْ يَقْصِدْ بِهِ إِلَى إِخْفَاءِ مَا ظَهَرَ وَإِظْهَارِ غَيْرِ حَقِيقَةٍ؟

قِيلَ لَهُ: سَمِيَ ذَلِكَ سِحْرًا مِنْ حَيْثُ كَانَ الْأَغْلَبُ فِي ظَنِّ السَّامِعِ أَنَّهُ لَوْ وَرَدَ عَلَيْهِ الْمَعْنَى بِلَفْظٍ مُسْتَكْرَرٍ غَيْرِ مُبَيَّنٍّ لَمَّا صَادَفَ مِنْهُ قَبُولًا وَلَا أَصْعَى إِلَيْهِ ، وَمَتَى سَمِعَ الْمَعْنَى بِعِبَارَةٍ مَقْبُولَةٍ عَذْبَةٍ لَا فَسَادَ فِيهَا وَلَا اسْتِنكَارَ وَقَدْ تَأْتَى لَهَا بِلَفْظِهِ وَحُسْنِ بَيَانِهِ بِمَا لَا يَتَأْتَى لَهُ الْغَيْبِيُّ الَّذِي لَا بَيَانَ لَهُ أَصْعَى إِلَيْهِ وَسَمِعَهُ وَقَبِلَهُ ، فَسَمِيَ اسْتِمَالَتَهُ لِلْقُلُوبِ بِهَذَا الضَّرْبِ مِنَ الْبَيَانِ سِحْرًا كَمَا يَسْتَعْمِلُ السَّاحِرُ قُلُوبَ الْحَاضِرِينَ إِلَى مَا مَوَّهَ بِهِ وَلَيْسَهُ ، فَمِنْ هَذَا الْوَجْهِ سَمِيَ الْبَيَانُ سِحْرًا لَا مِنَ الْوَجْهِ الَّذِي ظَنَنْتُ وَيَجُوزُ أَنْ يَكُونَ إِنَّمَا سَمِيَ الْبَيَانُ سِحْرًا لِأَنَّ الْمُقْتَدِرَ عَلَى الْبَيَانِ رُبَّمَا قُبِحَ بَيَانُهُ بَعْضُ مَا هُوَ حَسَنٌ وَحَسَنٌ عِنْدَهُ بَعْضُ مَا هُوَ قَبِيحٌ فَسَمَّاهُ لِذَلِكَ سِحْرًا ، كَمَا سَمِيَ مَا مَوَّهَ بِهِ صَاحِبُهُ وَأَظْهَرَ عَلَى غَيْرِ حَقِيقَةٍ سِحْرًا

قَالَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ: وَاسْمُ السِّحْرِ إِنَّمَا أُطْلِقَ عَلَى الْبَيَانِ مَجَازًا لَا حَقِيقَةً وَالْحَقِيقَةُ مَا وَصَفْنَا ، وَلِذَلِكَ صَارَ عِنْدَ الْإِطْلَاقِ إِنَّمَا يَتَنَاوَلُ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُمَوَّهٍ قَدْ قُصِدَ بِهِ الْخَدِيعَةُ وَالتَّلْيِيسُ وَإِظْهَارُ مَا لَا حَقِيقَةَ لَهُ وَلَا ثَبَاتَ

وَإِذْ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا أَصْلَ السِّحْرِ فِي اللَّغَةِ وَحُكْمَهُ عِنْدَ الْإِطْلَاقِ وَالتَّقْيِيدِ فَلْنَقُلْ فِي مَعْنَاهُ فِي التَّعَارُفِ وَالضَّرُوبِ الَّذِي يَشْتَعِلُ عَلَيْهَا هَذَا الْإِسْمُ وَمَا يَقْصِدُ بِهِ كُلُّ فَرِيقٍ مِنْ مُنْتَحِلِيهِ وَالْغَرَضُ الَّذِي يَجْرِي إِلَيْهِ مُدَّعَوْهُ ، فنَقُولُ وَبِاللَّهِ التَّوْفِيقُ:

إِنَّ ذَلِكَ يَنْقَسِمُ إِلَى أَنْحَاءٍ مُخْتَلِفَةٍ: فَمِنْهَا سِحْرُ أَهْلِ بَابِلَ الَّذِينَ ذَكَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى فِي قَوْلِهِ: { يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ } وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا صَابِئِينَ يَغْبُدُونَ الْكُؤَاكِبَ السَّبْعَةَ وَيُسَمُّونَهَا آلِهَةً وَيَعْتَقِدُونَ أَنَّ حَوَادِثَ الْعَالَمِ كُلِّهَا مِنْ أَفْعَالِهَا وَهُمْ مُعْطَلَةٌ لَا يَغْتَرِفُونَ بِالصَّنَائِعِ الْوَاجِبَةِ الْمُتَبَدِّعِ لِلْكُؤَاكِبِ وَجَمِيعِ أَجْزَامِ الْعَالَمِ وَهُمْ الَّذِينَ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى إِلَيْهِمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلَهُ صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ فَدَعَاهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَحَاجَّهُمْ بِالْحِجَااجِ الَّذِي بَهَرَهُمْ بِهِ وَأَقَامَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِهِ الْحُجَّةَ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يُمَكِّنْهُمْ دَفْعُهُ ثُمَّ الْقُوَّةَ فِي النَّارِ فَجَعَلَهَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا ، ثُمَّ أَمَرَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِالْهَجْرَةِ إِلَى الشَّامِ وَكَانَ أَهْلُ بَابِلَ وَإِقْلِيمِ الْعِرَاقِ وَالشَّامِ وَمِصْرَ وَالرُّومَ عَلَى هَذِهِ الْمَقَالَةِ إِلَى أَيَّامِ بِيوراسبِ الَّذِي تُسَمِّيهِ الْعَرَبُ "الصُّخَّالَ" وَإِنَّ أَفْرِيدُونَ وَكَانَ مِنْ أَهْلِ دَنْبَاوندِ اسْتَجَاشَ عَلَيْهِ بِلَادَهُ وَكَاتَبَ سَائِرَ مَنْ يُطِيعُهُ وَلَهُ قِصَصٌ طَوِيلَةٌ حَتَّى أَرَادَ مُلْكُهُ وَأَسْرَهُ وَجْهًا لِلْعَامَّةِ وَالنِّسَاءِ عِنْدَنَا يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّ أَفْرِيدُونَ حَبَسَ بِيوراسبَ فِي جَبَلٍ دَنْبَاوندِ الْعَالِي عَلَى الْجِبَالِ ، وَأَنَّهُ حَيٌّ هُنَاكَ مُقَيَّدٌ ، وَأَنَّ السَّحْرَةَ يَأْتُونَهُ هُنَاكَ فَيَأْخُذُونَ عَنْهُ السِّحْرَ ، وَأَنَّهُ سَيَخْرُجُ فَيَغْلِبُ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ ، وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ الدَّجَالُ الَّذِي أَخْبَرَ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَحَدَّثَنَا ، وَأَحْسَنُهُمْ أَخَذُوا ذَلِكَ عَنْ الْمَجُوسِ وَصَارَتْ مَمْلَكَةُ إِقْلِيمِ بَابِلَ لِلْفُرسِ فَاثْتَقَلَ بَعْضُ مُلُوكِهِمْ إِلَيْهَا فِي بَعْضِ الْأَزْمَانِ

فَاسْتَوْطَنُوهَا وَلَمْ يَكُونُوا عَبْدَةً أَوْثَانٍ بَلْ كَانُوا مُوَحِّدِينَ مُقَرِّينَ بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ ، إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ مَعَ ذَلِكَ يُعَظِّمُونَ الْعَنَاصِرَ الْأَرْبَعَةَ : الْمَاءَ ، وَالنَّارَ ، وَالْأَرْضَ ، وَالْهَوَاءَ ؛ لِمَا فِيهَا مِنْ مَنَافِعِ الْخَلْقِ وَأَنَّ بِهَا قِيَامَ الْحَيَوَانِ وَإِنَّمَا حَدَّثَتِ الْمَجُوسِيَّةُ فِيهِمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي زَمَانٍ (كَشْتَأَسَب) حِينَ دَعَاهُ (زَرَادُشْت) فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُ عَلَى شَرَائِطٍ وَأُمُورٍ يَطُولُ شَرْحُهَا ، وَإِنَّمَا عَرَضْنَا فِي هَذَا الْمَوْضِعِ الْإِبَانَةَ عَمَّا كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ سَحَرَةُ بَابِلَ

وَلَمَّا ظَهَرَتْ الْفُرْسُ عَلَى هَذَا الْإَقْلِيمِ كَانَتْ تَتَدَيَّنُ بِقَتْلِ السَّحَرَةِ وَإِبَادَتِهَا ، وَلَمْ يَزَلْ ذَلِكَ فِيهِمْ وَمِنْ دِينِهِمْ بَعْدَ حُدُوثِ الْمَجُوسِيَّةِ فِيهِمْ وَقَبْلَهُ إِلَى أَنْ زَالَ عَنْهُمْ الْمُلْكُ وَكَانَتْ عُلُومُ أَهْلِ بَابِلَ قَبْلَ ظُهُورِ الْفُرْسِ عَلَيْهِمُ الْحِيلَ وَالنِيرَنِيَّاتِ وَأَحْكَامِ التُّجُومِ ، وَكَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ أَوْثَانًا قَدْ عَمِلُوهَا عَلَى أَسْمَاءِ الْكَوَائِبِ السَّبْعَةِ وَجَعَلُوا لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهَا هَيْكَلًا فِيهِ صَنَمُهُ وَيَتَقَرَّبُونَ إِلَيْهَا بِضُرُوبٍ مِنَ الْأَفْعَالِ عَلَى حَسَبِ اعْتِقَادَاتِهِمْ مِنْ مُوَافَقَةِ ذَلِكَ لِلْكَوَائِبِ الَّذِي يَطْلُبُونَ مِنْهُ بِرَعْمِهِمْ فَعَلَّ خَيْرٌ أَوْ شَرٌّ ، فَمَنْ أَرَادَ شَيْئًا مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَالصَّلَاحِ بِرَعْمِهِ يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيْهِ بِمَا يُوَافِقُ الْمُشْتَرَى مِنَ الدَّخَنِ وَالرُّقَى وَالْعَقْدِ وَالنَّفْثِ عَلَيْهَا ، وَمَنْ طَلَبَ شَيْئًا مِنَ الشَّرِّ وَالْحَرْبِ وَالْمَوْتِ وَالْبَوَارِ لِغَيْرِهِ تَقَرَّبَ بِرَعْمِهِ إِلَى رُحْلِ بِمَا يُوَافِقُهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ ، وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْبَرْقَ وَالْحَرَقَ وَالطَّاعُونَ تَقَرَّبَ بِرَعْمِهِ إِلَى الْمَرِيخِ بِمَا يُوَافِقُهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ مِنْ ذَبْحِ بَعْضِ الْحَيَوَانَاتِ وَجَمِيعِ تِلْكَ الرُّقَى بِالْبَطِّيَّةِ تَشْتَمِلُ عَلَى تَعْظِيمِ تِلْكَ الْكَوَائِبِ إِلَى مَا يُرِيدُونَ مِنْ خَيْرٍ أَوْ شَرٍّ وَمَحَبَّةٍ وَبُغْضٍ ، فَيُعْطِيهِمْ مَا شَاءُوا مِنْ ذَلِكَ ، فَيَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ مَا شَاءُوا فِي غَيْرِهِمْ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَاسَةٍ وَلَا مَلَامَسَةٍ سِوَى مَا قَدَّمُوهُ مِنَ الْفَرَبَاتِ لِلْكَوَائِبِ الَّذِي طَلَبُوا ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ ؛ فَمِنْ الْعَامَّةِ مَنْ يَزْعُمُ أَنَّهُ يَقْلِبُ الْإِنْسَانَ جِمَارًا أَوْ كَلْبًا ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَعَادَهُ ، وَيَرْكُبُ الْبَيْضَةَ وَالْمِكْنَسَةَ وَالْخَابِيَةَ ، وَيَطِيرُ فِي الْهَوَاءِ فَيَمْضِي مِنَ الْعِرَاقِ إِلَى الْهِنْدِ وَإِلَى مَا شَاءَ مِنَ الْبُلْدَانِ ثُمَّ يَرْجِعُ مِنْ لَيْلِيهِ

وَكَانَتْ عَوَائِمُهُمْ تَعْتَقِدُ ذَلِكَ لِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ الْكَوَائِبَ ، وَكُلُّ مَا دَعَا إِلَى تَعْظِيمِهَا اعْتَقَدُوهُ وَكَانَتْ السَّحَرَةُ تَحْتَالُ فِي جَلَالِ ذَلِكَ بِحِيلٍ تُمَوِّهُ بِهَا عَلَى الْعَامَّةِ إِلَى اعْتِقَادِ صِحَّتِهِ بِأَنْ يَزْعُمَ أَنَّ ذَلِكَ لَا يَنْفُذُ وَلَا يَنْتَفِعُ بِهِ أَحَدٌ وَلَا يَبْلُغُ مَا يُرِيدُ إِلَّا مَنْ اعْتَقَدَ صِحَّةَ قَوْلِهِمْ وَتَصْدِيقِهِمْ فِيمَا يَقُولُونَ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ مُلُوكُهُمْ تَعْتَرِضُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي ذَلِكَ ، بَلْ كَانَتْ السَّحَرَةُ عِنْدَهَا بِالْمَحَلِّ الْأَجَلِ لِمَا كَانَ لَهَا فِي نَفُوسِ الْعَامَّةِ مِنْ مَحَلِّ التَّعْظِيمِ وَالْإِجْلَالِ ، وَلِأَنَّ الْمُلُوكَ فِي ذَلِكَ الْوَقْتِ كَانَتْ تَعْتَقِدُ مَا تَدَّعِيهِ السَّحَرَةُ لِلْكَوَائِبِ ، إِلَى أَنْ زَالَتْ تِلْكَ الْمَمَالِكُ أَلَا تَرَى أَنَّ النَّاسَ فِي زَمَنِ فِرْعَوْنَ كَانُوا يَتَبَارَزُونَ بِالْعِلْمِ وَالسَّحْرِ وَالْحِيلِ وَالْمَخَارِقِ وَلِلَّذَلِكَ بُعِثَ إِلَيْهِمْ مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ بِالْعَصَا وَالْآيَاتِ الَّتِي عَلِمَتْ السَّحَرَةُ أَنَّهَا لَيْسَتْ مِنَ السَّحْرِ فِي شَيْءٍ وَأَنَّهَا لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهَا غَيْرُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى ؟ فَلَمَّا زَالَتْ تِلْكَ الْمَمَالِكُ وَكَانَ مِنْ مُلْكِهِمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْمُوَحِّدِينَ يَطْلُبُونَهُمْ وَيَتَقَرَّبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ

تَعَالَى بِقَتْلِهِمْ ، وَكَانُوا يَدْعُونَ عَوَامَّ النَّاسِ وَجُهَاْلَهُمْ سِرًّا كَمَا يَفْعَلُهُ السَّاعَةِ كَثِيرٌ مِمَّنْ يَدْعِي ذَلِكَ مَعَ النَّسَاءِ وَالْأَخْدَاتِ وَالْأَعْمَارِ وَالْجُهَالِ الْحَشَوِ وَكَانُوا يَدْعُونَ مَنْ يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ ذَلِكَ إِلَى تَصْدِيقِ قَوْلِهِمْ وَالْإِعْتِرَافِ بِصِحَّتِهِ وَالْمُصَدِّقِ لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ يَكْفُرُ مِنْ وَجْهِهِ:

أَحَدُهَا: التَّصْدِيقُ بِوُجُوبِ تَعْظِيمِهِ الْكَوَائِبِ وَتَسْمِيَتِهَا آلِهَةً
وَالثَّانِي: اعْتِرَافُهُ بِأَنَّ الْكَوَائِبَ تَقْدِرُ عَلَى ضَرِّهِ وَنَفْعِهِ وَالثَّالِثُ: أَنَّ السَّحْرَةَ تَقْدِرُ عَلَى مِثْلِ مُعْجَزَاتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِمْ مَلَكَئِينَ يُبَيِّنَانِ لِلنَّاسِ حَقِيقَةَ مَا يَدْعُونَ وَبُطْلَانَ مَا يَذْكُرُونَ ، وَيَكْشِفَانِ لَهُمْ مَا بِهِ يُمَوِّهُونَ ، وَيُخَيِّرَانِهِمْ بِمَعَانِي تِلْكَ الرُّقَى وَأَنَّهَا شِرْكٌ وَكَفْرٌ وَبِحِيلِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا يَتَوَصَّلُونَ بِهَا إِلَى التَّمْوِيهِ عَلَى الْعَامَّةِ وَيُظْهِرُونَ لَهُمْ حَقَائِقَهَا وَيَنْهَوْنَهُمْ عَنْ قَبُولِهَا وَالْعَمَلِ بِهَا بِقَوْلِهِ: { إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ } فَهَذَا أَصْلُ سِحْرِ بَابِلَ ، وَمَعَ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ كَانُوا يَسْتَعْمِلُونَ سَائِرَ وَجُوهِ السَّحْرِ وَالْحِيلِ الَّتِي نَذَكُرُهَا وَيُمَوِّهُونَ بِهَا عَلَى الْعَامَّةِ وَيَعْرِضُونَهَا إِلَى فِعْلِ الْكَوَائِبِ لِئَلَّا يَنْحَتَ عَنْهَا وَيُسَلِّمَهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْ ضُرُوبِ السَّحْرِ كَثِيرٌ مِنَ التَّخْيِيلَاتِ الَّتِي مَظْهَرُهَا عَلَى خِلَافِ حَقَائِقِهَا فَمِنْهَا مَا يَعْرِفُهُ النَّاسُ بِجَرَائِنِ الْعَادَةِ بِهَا وَظُهُورِهَا وَمِنْهَا مَا يَخْفَى وَيَلْطَفُ وَلَا يَعْرِفُ حَقِيقَتَهُ وَمَعْنَى بَاطِلِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ تَعَاطَى مَعْرِفَةَ ذَلِكَ ؛ لِأَنَّ كُلَّ عِلْمٍ لَا بُدَّ أَنْ يَشْتَجِلَ عَلَى جَلْبِيٍّ وَخَفْيِيٍّ وَظَاهِرٍ وَغَامِضٍ

فَالْجَلْبِيُّ مِنْهُ يَعْرِفُهُ كُلُّ مَنْ رَأَاهُ وَسَمِعَهُ مِنَ الْعُقَلَاءِ ، وَالْغَامِضُ الْخَفْيِيُّ لَا يَعْرِفُهُ إِلَّا أَهْلُهُ وَمَنْ تَعَاطَى مَعْرِفَتَهُ وَتَكَلَّفَ فِعْلَهُ وَابْتَحَثَ عَنْهُ ، وَذَلِكَ نَحْوُ مَا يَتَخَيَّلُ رَاكِبُ السَّفِينَةِ إِذَا سَارَتْ فِي النَّهْرِ فَيَرَى أَنَّ الشَّطَّ بِمَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ التَّخْلِ وَالْبُنْيَانِ سَائِرٌ مَعَهُ ، وَكَمَا يَرَى الْقَمَرُ فِي مَهَبِّ الشَّمَالِ يَسِيرُ لِلْعَيْمِ فِي مَهَبِّ الْجَنُوبِ ، وَكَدَوْرَانِ الدَّوَامَةِ فِيهَا الشَّامَةِ فَيَرَاهَا كَالطُّوفِ الْمُسْتَدِيرِ فِي أَرْجَائِهَا ، وَكَذَلِكَ يَرَى هَذَا فِي الرَّحَى إِذَا كَانَتْ سَرِيعَةً الدَّوْرَانِ ، وَكَالْعُودِ فِي طَرَفِهِ الْحَمْرَةِ إِذَا أَدَارَهُ مُدِيرُهُ رَأَى تِلْكَ النَّارَ الَّتِي فِي طَرَفِهِ كَالطُّوفِ الْمُسْتَدِيرِ ، وَكَالْعَيْنَةِ الَّتِي يَرَاهَا فِي قَدَحٍ فِيهِ مَاءٌ كَالْخَوْخَةِ وَالْإِجَاصَةِ عَظْمًا ، وَكَالشَّخْصِ الصَّغِيرِ يَرَاهُ فِي الضَّبَابِ عَظِيمًا جَسِيمًا ، وَكَبَحَارِ الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي يُرِيكَ قُرْصَ الشَّمْسِ عِنْدَ طُلُوعِهَا عَظِيمًا فَإِذَا فَارَقَتْهُ وَارْتَفَعَتْ صَغُرَتْ ، وَكَمَا يَرَى الْمُرْدَى فِي الْمَاءِ مُنْكَسِرًا أَوْ مُعَوِّجًا ، وَكَمَا يَرَى الْخَاتَمَ إِذَا قَرَّبْتَهُ مِنْ عَيْنِكَ فِي سَعَةِ خَلْقَةِ السَّوَارِ

وَنَظَائِرُ ذَلِكَ كَثِيرَةٌ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ الَّتِي تُتَخَيَّلُ عَلَى غَيْرِ حَقَائِقِهَا فَيَعْرِفُهَا عَامَّةُ النَّاسِ وَمِنْهَا مَا يَلْطَفُ فَلَا يَعْرِفُهُ إِلَّا مَنْ تَعَاطَاهُ وَتَأَمَّلَهُ كَخَيْطِ السَّحَارَةِ الَّتِي يَخْرُجُ مَرَّةً أَحْمَرٌ وَمَرَّةً أَصْفَرٌ وَمَرَّةً أَسْوَدَ ، وَمِنْ لَطِيفِ ذَلِكَ وَدَقِيقِهِ مَا يَفْعَلُهُ الْمُشْعُودُونَ مِنْ جِهَةِ الْحَرَكَاتِ وَإِظْهَارِ التَّخْيِيلَاتِ الَّتِي تَخْرُجُ عَلَى غَيْرِ حَقَائِقِهَا حَتَّى يُرِيكَ عُصْفُورًا مَعَهُ أَنَّهُ قَدْ ذَبَحَهُ ثُمَّ يُرِيكَهُ وَقَدْ طَارَ بَعْدَ ذَبْحِهِ وَإِبَانَةِ رَأْسِهِ

وَذَلِكَ لِخَفَةِ حَرَكَتِهِ ، وَالْمَذْبُوحُ غَيْرُ الَّذِي طَارَ لِأَنَّهُ يَكُونُ مَعَهُ اثْنَانِ قَدْ خَبَأَ أَحَدُهُمَا وَأَظْهَرَ
الْآخَرَ ، وَيُخَيِّئُ لِخَفَةِ الْحَرَكَةِ الْمَذْبُوحَ وَيُظْهِرُ الَّذِي نَظِيرُهُ . وَيُظْهِرُ أَنَّهُ قَدْ ذَبَحَ إِنْسَانًا وَأَنَّهُ قَدْ
بَلَغَ سَيْفًا وَأَدْخَلَهُ فِي جُوفِهِ ، وَلَيْسَ لَشَيْءٍ مِنْهُ حَقِيقَةٌ وَمِنْ تَحْوِ ذَلِكَ مَا يَفْعَلُهُ أَصْحَابُ الْحَرَكَاتِ
لِلصُّورِ الْمُعْمُولَةِ مِنْ صُفْرِ أَوْ غَيْرِهِ فَمَرَى فَارِسَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلَانِ فَيَقْتُلُ أَحَدُهُمَا الْآخَرَ ، وَيَنْصَرِفُ بِحِجَلٍ
قَدْ أُعِدَّتْ لَذَلِكَ وَكَفَّارِسٍ مِنْ صُفْرِ عَلَى فَرَسٍ فِي يَدِهِ بُوْقٌ كُلَّمَا مَضَتْ سَاعَةٌ مِنَ النَّهَارِ صَرَبَ
بِالبُوقِ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَمَسَّهُ أَحَدٌ وَلَا يَتَقَدَّمَ إِلَيْهِ وَقَدْ ذَكَرَ الْكَلْبِيُّ أَنَّ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْجُنْدِ خَرَجَ يَبْغِضُ
نَوَاجِي الشَّامِ مُتَصَيِّدًا وَمَعَهُ كَلْبٌ لَهُ وَغَلَامٌ فَرَأَى ثَعْلَبًا فَأَغْرَى بِهِ الْكَلْبَ فَدَخَلَ الثَّعْلَبُ ثُقْبًا فِي
تَلٍّ هُنَاكَ وَدَخَلَ الْكَلْبُ خَلْفَهُ فَلَمْ يَخْرُجْ ، فَأَمَرَ الْغَلَامُ أَنْ يَدْخُلَ فَدَخَلَ وَانْتَظَرَهُ صَاحِبُهُ فَلَمْ يَخْرُجْ
، فَوَقَفَ مُتَهَيِّئًا لِلدُّخُولِ ، فَمَرَّ بِهِ رَجُلٌ فَأَخْبَرَهُ بِشَأْنِ الثَّعْلَبِ وَالْغَلَامِ وَأَنَّ وَاحِدًا مِنْهُمْ لَمْ
يَخْرُجْ وَأَنَّهُ مُتَاهَبٌ لِلدُّخُولِ ، فَأَخَذَ الرَّجُلُ بِيَدِهِ فَأَدْخَلَهُ إِلَى هُنَاكَ ، فَمَضَى إِلَى سِرْبٍ طَوِيلٍ حَتَّى
أَفْضَى بِهِمَا إِلَى نَبْتٍ قَدْ فُتِحَ لَهُ صَوَةٌ مِنْ مَوْضِعٍ يَنْزِلُ إِلَيْهِ بِمِرْقَاتَيْنِ ، فَوَقَفَ بِهِ عَلَى الْمِرْقَاةِ
الْأُولَى حَتَّى أَضَاءَ النَّبْتُ حِينًا ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ : أَنْظِرْ فَنَظَرُ فَإِذَا الْكَلْبُ وَالرَّجُلُ وَالثَّعْلَبُ قَتَلَى ، وَإِذَا فِي
صَدْرِ النَّبْتِ رَجُلٌ وَاقِفٌ مُقَنَّعٌ فِي الْحَدِيدِ وَفِي يَدِهِ سَيْفٌ ، فَقَالَ لَهُ الرَّجُلُ : أَرَأَيْتَ هَذَا لَوْ دَخَلَ
إِلَيْهِ هَذَا الْمَدْحَلُ أَلْفَ رَجُلٍ لَقَتَلَهُمْ كُلَّهُمْ فَقَالَ : وَكَيْفَ ؟ قَالَ : لِأَنَّهُ قَدْ رُتِبَ وَهُدِمَ عَلَى هَيْئَةٍ
مَتَى وَضَعَ الْإِنْسَانُ رِجْلَهُ عَلَى الْمِرْقَاةِ الثَّانِيَةِ لِلنُّزُولِ تَقَدَّمَ الرَّجُلُ الْمُعْمُولُ فِي الصَّدْرِ فَضَرَبَهُ
بِالسَّيْفِ الَّذِي فِي يَدِهِ ، فَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ فَقَالَ : فَكَيْفَ الْجِيلَةُ فِي هَذَا ؟ قَالَ : يَنْبَغِي أَنْ
تَحْفِرَ مِنْ خَلْفِهِ سَرَبًا يُفْضِي بِكَ إِلَيْهِ ، فَإِنْ وَصَلْتَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ تِلْكَ النَّاحِيَةِ لَمْ يَتَحَرَّكَ فَاسْتَأْجَرَ
الْجُنْدِيَّ أُجْرَاءَ وَصُنَاعًا حَتَّى حَفَرُوا سَرَبًا مِنْ خَلْفِ التَّلِّ فَأَفْضَوْا إِلَيْهِ ، فَلَمْ يَتَحَرَّكَ ، وَإِذَا رَجُلٌ
مُعْمُولٌ مِنْ صُفْرِ أَوْ غَيْرِهِ قَدْ أُلْبَسَ السَّلَاحُ وَأُعْطِيَ السَّيْفَ فَقَلَعَهُ ، وَرَأَى بَابًا آخَرَ فِي ذَلِكَ النَّبْتِ
فَفَتَحَهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ قَبْرٌ لِبَعْضِ الْمُلُوكِ مَبْنِيٌّ عَلَى سَرِيرٍ هُنَاكَ وَأَمْثَالُ ذَلِكَ كَثِيرَةٌ جِدًّا وَمِنْهَا الصُّورُ الَّتِي
يُصَوِّرُهَا مُصَوِّرُو الرُّومِ وَالْهِنْدِ حَتَّى لَا يُفَرِّقَ النَّاطِرُ بَيْنَ الْإِنْسَانِ وَبَيْنَهَا ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتَقَدَّمَ لَهُ عِلْمٌ أَنَّهَا
صُورَةٌ لَا يَشْكُ فِي أَنَّهَا إِنْسَانٌ ، وَحَتَّى تَصَوِّرُهَا صَاحِكَةً أَوْ بَاكِئَةً ، وَحَتَّى يُفَرِّقَ فِيهَا بَيْنَ الضَّحَلِ
مِنْ الْحَبْلِ وَالسُّرُورِ وَضَحَلِ الشَّامِ

فَهَذِهِ الْوُجُوهُ مِنْ لَطِيفِ أُمُورِ التَّخَايِيلِ وَخَفِيِّهَا وَمَا ذَكَرْنَاهُ قَبْلُ مِنْ جَلِيلِهَا وَكَانَ سِحْرُ سَحَرَةٍ
فِرْعَوْنَ مِنْ هَذَا الضَّرْبِ عَلَى التَّحْوِ الَّذِي بَيَّنَّا مِنْ حِيلِهِمْ فِي الْعِصِيِّ وَالْجَبَالِ وَالَّذِي ذَكَرْنَاهُ مِنْ
مَذَاهِبِ أَهْلِ بَابِلَ فِي الْقَدِيمِ وَسِحْرِهِمْ وَوُجُوهِ جِيلِهِمْ بَعْضُهُ سَمِعْنَاهُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَعْرِفَةِ بِذَلِكَ
وَبَعْضُهُ وَجَدْنَاهُ فِي الْكُتُبِ قَدْ نُقِلَتْ حَدِيثًا مِنَ النَّبِطِيَّةِ إِلَى الْعَرَبِيَّةِ ، مِنْهَا كِتَابٌ فِي ذِكْرِ سِحْرِهِمْ

وَأَصْنَافِهِ وَوُجُوهِهِ ، وَكُلُّهَا مَبْنِيَّةٌ عَلَى الْأَصْلِ الَّذِي ذَكَرْنَاهُ مِنْ قُرْبَانَاتِ الْكَوَائِبِ وَتَغْطِيَمِهَا وَخَرَافَاتٍ مَعَهَا لَا تُسَاوِي ذِكْرَهَا وَلَا فَايْدَةَ فِيهَا

وَصَرَبْتُ آخِرُ مِنَ السَّخَرِ: وَهُوَ مَا يَدْعُوْنَهُ مِنْ حَدِيثِ الْجِنِّ وَالشَّيَاطِينِ وَطَاعَاتِهِمْ لَهُمْ بِالرُّقَى وَالْعَزَائِمِ . وَيَتَوَصَّلُونَ إِلَى مَا يُرِيدُونَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ بِتَقْدِمَةِ أُمُورٍ وَمُوَاطَاةٍ قَوْمٍ قَدْ أَعْدَوْهُمْ لِذَلِكَ ، وَعَلَى ذَلِكَ كَانَ يَجْرِي أَمْرُ الْكُهَّانِ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ ، وَكَانَتْ أَكْثَرُ مَخَارِقِ الْحَلَّاجِ مِنْ بَابِ الْمُوَاطَاةِ وَلَوْلَا أَنَّ هَذَا الْكِتَابَ لَا يَحْتَمِلُ اسْتِقْصَاءَ ذَلِكَ لَذَكَرْتُ مِنْهَا مَا يُوقِفُ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِنْ مَخَارِقِهِ وَمَخَارِقِ أُمَّالِهِ

وَصَرَبْتُ أَصْحَابَ الْعَزَائِمِ وَفَتَنَتِهِمْ عَلَى النَّاسِ غَيْرُ يَسِيرٍ ، وَذَلِكَ أَنَّهُمْ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَى النَّاسِ مِنْ بَابِ أَنَّ الْجِنَّ إِنَّمَا تُطِيعُهُمْ بِالرُّقَى الَّتِي هِيَ أَسْمَاءُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى ، فَإِنَّهُمْ يُجِيبُونَ بِذَلِكَ مَنْ شَاءُوا وَيُخْرِجُونَ الْجِنَّ لِمَنْ شَاءُوا فَتَصَدِّقُهُمُ الْعَامَّةُ عَلَى اغْتِرَارٍ بِمَا يُظْهِرُونَ مِنْ انْقِيَادِ الْجِنِّ لَهُمْ بِأَسْمَاءِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى الَّتِي كَانَتْ تُطِيعُ بِهَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ دَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَأَنَّهُمْ يُخْبِرُونَهُمْ بِالْخَبَائِطِ وَالسُّرُوقِ وَقَدْ كَانَ الْمُعْتَصِدُ بِاللَّهِ مَعَ جَلَالَتِهِ وَشَهَامَتِهِ وَوُفُورِ عَقْلِهِ اغْتَرَّ بِقَوْلِ هَؤُلَاءِ ، وَقَدْ ذَكَرَهُ أَصْحَابُ التَّوَارِيخِ ، وَذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ كَانَ يَظْهَرُ فِي دَارِهِ الَّتِي كَانَ يَخْلُو فِيهَا بِبَنَاتِهِ وَأَهْلِهِ شَخْصٌ فِي يَدِهِ سَيْفٌ فِي أَوْقَاتٍ مُخْتَلِفَةٍ ، وَأَكْثَرُهُ وَقْتُ الظُّهْرِ ، فَإِذَا طُلِبَ لَمْ يَوْجَدْ وَلَمْ يَقْدِرْ عَلَيْهِ وَلَمْ يُوقِفْ لَهُ عَلَى أَثَرٍ مَعَ كَثَرَةِ التَّفَتِيهِشِ وَقَدْ رَأَاهُ بَعْضُهُمْ مِرَارًا ، فَأَهَمَّتْهُ نَفْسُهُ وَدَعَا بِالْمُعَرِّمِينَ فَحَضَرُوا وَأَحْضَرُوا مَعَهُمْ رِجَالًا وَنِسَاءً وَزَعَمُوا أَنَّ فِيهِمْ مَجَانِينَ وَأَصِحَاءً ، فَأَمَرَ بَعْضُ رُؤَسَائِهِمُ بِالْعَزِيمَةِ ، فَعَزَّمُوا عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِنْهُمْ زَعَمَ أَنَّهُ كَانَ صَاحِبًا فَجَنًّا وَتَخَبَّطَ وَهُوَ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ وَذَكَرُوا لَهُ أَنَّ هَذَا غَايَةُ الْحَذَقِ بِهَذِهِ الصَّنَاعَةِ ؛ إِذْ أَطَاعَتْهُ الْجِنُّ فِي تَخْبِيْطِ الصَّحِيحِ وَإِنَّمَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الْمُعَرِّمِ بِمُوَاطَاةٍ مِنْهُ لِذَلِكَ الصَّحِيحِ عَلَى أَنَّهُ مَتَى عَزَّمْ عَلَيْهِ جَنَّنَ نَفْسَهُ وَخَبَّطَ فَجَارَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى الْمُعْتَصِدِ ، فَقَامَتْ نَفْسُهُ مِنْهُ وَكَرِهَهُ ، إِلَّا أَنَّهُ سَأَلَهُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِ الشَّخْصِ الَّذِي يَظْهَرُ فِي دَارِهِ ، فَخَرَقُوا عَلَيْهِ بِأَشْيَاءَ عَلَّقُوا قَلْبَهُ بِهَا مِنْ غَيْرِ تَحْصِيلٍ لِشَيْءٍ مِنْ أَمْرِ مَا سَأَلَهُمْ عَنْهُ ، فَأَمَرَهُمْ بِالْإِنْصِرَافِ وَأَمَرَ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ حَضَرٍ بِخُمْسَةِ دَرَاهِمٍ ثُمَّ تَحَرَّرَ الْمُعْتَصِدُ بِغَايَةِ مَا أَمْكَنَهُ وَأَمَرَ بِالِاسْتِثْنَائِ مِنْ سُورِ الدَّارِ حَيْثُ لَا يُمَكِّنُ فِيهِ جِيلَةً مِنْ تَسْلُقٍ وَنَحْوِهِ ، وَبَطَّحَتْ فِي أَعْلَى السُّورِ خَوَابِي لَيْلًا يَحْتَالُ بِالْقَاءِ الْمَعَالِيْقِ الَّتِي يَحْتَالُ بِهَا اللُّصُوصُ؛ ثُمَّ لَمْ يُوقِفْ لِذَلِكَ الشَّخْصِ عَلَى خَبَرٍ إِلَّا ظُهُورُهُ لَهُ الْوَقْتُ بَعْدَ الْوَقْتِ ، إِلَى أَنْ تَوَفَّى الْمُعْتَصِدُ وَهَذِهِ الْخَوَابِي الْمَبْطُوحَةُ عَلَى السُّورِ وَقَدْ رَأَيْتُهَا عَلَى سُورِ الثُّرَيَّا الَّتِي بَنَاهَا الْمُعْتَصِدُ فَسَأَلْتُ صَدِيقًا لِي كَانَ قَدْ حَجَبَ لِلْمُقْتَدِرِ بِاللَّهِ عَنْ أَمْرِ هَذَا الشَّخْصِ ، وَهَلْ تَبَيَّنَ أَمْرُهُ؟

فَذَكَرَ لِي أَنَّهُ لَمْ يُوقَفْ عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ إِلَّا فِي أَيَّامِ الْمُقْتَدِرِ ، وَأَنَّ ذَلِكَ الشَّخْصَ كَانَ خَادِمًا أُبْيَضَ يُسَمَّى يَقُوقَ ، وَكَانَ يَمِيلُ إِلَى بَعْضِ الْجَوَارِي اللَّاتِي فِي دَاخِلِ دُورِ الْحَرَمِ ، وَكَانَ قَدْ اتَّخَذَ لِحْيَ عَلَى الْوَانِ مُخْتَلِفَةٍ ، وَكَانَ إِذَا لَبَسَ بَعْضَ تِلْكَ اللَّحَى لَا يَشْكُ مَنْ رَأَاهُ أَنَّهَا لِحْيَتُهُ ، وَكَانَ يَلْبَسُ فِي الْوَقْتِ الَّذِي يُرِيدُهُ لِحْيَةً مِنْهَا وَيَظْهَرُ فِي ذَلِكَ الْمَوْضِعِ فِي يَدِهِ سَيْفٌ أَوْ غَيْرُهُ مِنْ السِّلَاحِ حَيْثُ يَفْعُ نَظْرُ الْمُعْتَصِدِ .

فَإِذَا طُلِبَ دَخَلَ بَيْنَ الشَّجَرِ الَّذِي فِي الْبُسْتَانِ أَوْ فِي بَعْضِ تِلْكَ الْمَمَرَّاتِ أَوْ الْعُطْفَاتِ ، فَإِذَا غَابَ عَنْ أَبْصَارِ طَالِبِيهِ نَزَعَ اللَّحْيَةَ وَجَعَلَهَا فِي كُمِهِ أَوْ حَوْزَتِهِ وَبِتَقَى السِّلَاحَ مَعَهُ كَأَنَّهُ بَعْضُ الْخَدَمِ الطَّالِبِينَ لِلشَّخْصِ ، وَلَا يَزْتَابُونَ بِهِ وَيَسْأَلُونَهُ هَلْ رَأَيْتَ فِي هَذِهِ التَّاجِيَةِ أَحَدًا فَإِنَّا قَدْ رَأَيْنَاهُ صَارَ إِلَيْهَا ؟ فَيَقُولُ : مَا رَأَيْتُ أَحَدًا وَكَانَ إِذَا وَقَعَ مِثْلُ هَذَا الْفَرْعِ فِي الدَّارِ خَرَجَتْ الْجَوَارِي مِنْ دَاخِلِ الدُّورِ إِلَى هَذَا الْمَوْضِعِ فَيَرَى هُوَ تِلْكَ الْجَارِيَةَ وَيُخَاطِبُهَا بِمَا يُرِيدُ ، وَإِنَّمَا كَانَ غَرَضُهُ مُشَاهَدَةَ الْجَوَارِي ، وَكَلَامُهَا ، فَلَمْ يَزَلْ دَائِبُهُ إِلَى أَيَّامِ الْمُقْتَدِرِ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ إِلَى الْبُلْدَانِ وَصَارَ إِلَى طَرَسُوسَ وَأَقَامَ بِهَا إِلَى أَنْ مَاتَ ، وَتَحَدَّثْتُ الْجَارِيَةَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ بِحَدِيثِهِ وَوَقَفْتُ عَلَى اِخْتِيَالِهِ فَهَذَا خَادِمٌ قَدْ اِخْتَالَ بِمِثْلِ هَذِهِ الْحِيلَةِ الْخَفِيَّةِ الَّتِي لَمْ يَهْتَدِ لَهَا أَحَدٌ مَعَ شِدَّةِ عِنَايَةِ الْمُعْتَصِدِ ، وَأَعْيَاهُ مَعْرِفَتُهَا وَالْوُقُوفُ عَلَيْهَا وَلَمْ تَكُنْ صِنَاعَتُهُ الْحَبْلَ وَالْمَخَارِيقَ ، فَمَا ظَنُّكَ بِمَنْ قَدْ جَعَلَ هَذَا صِنَاعَةً وَمَعَاشًا ؟

وَضَرَبَ آخَرَ مِنَ السَّحْرِ وَهُوَ السَّحْمُ بِالنَّمِيمَةِ وَالْوَشَايَةِ بِهَا وَالبَلَاغَاتِ ، وَالْإِفْسَادِ وَالتَّضْرِيبِ مِنْ وَجْهِ خَفِيَّةٍ لَطِيفَةٍ ، وَذَلِكَ عَامٌّ شَائِعٌ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَقَدْ حُكِيَ أَنَّ امْرَأَةً أَرَادَتْ إِفْسَادَ مَا بَيْنَ زَوْجَيْنِ فَصَارَتْ إِلَى الزَّوْجَةِ فَقَالَتْ لَهَا : إِنَّ زَوْجَكَ مُغْرَضٌ وَقَدْ سَجَرَ وَهُوَ مَأْخُودٌ عَنْكَ وَسَاسَحَرُهُ لَكَ حَتَّى لَا يُرِيدَ غَيْرَكَ وَلَا يَنْظُرَ إِلَى سِوَاكَ ، وَلَكِنْ لَا بُدَّ أَنْ تَأْخُذِي مِنْ شَعْرِ حَلْقِهِ بِالْمُوسَى ثَلَاثَ شَعْرَاتٍ إِذَا نَامَ وَتُعْطِيبِيهَا ، فَإِنَّ بِهَا يَتِمُّ الْأَمْرُ فَاعْتَرَتْ الْمَرْأَةُ بِقَوْلِهَا وَصَدَّقَتْهَا ثُمَّ ذَهَبَتْ إِلَى الرَّجُلِ وَقَالَتْ لَهُ : إِنَّ امْرَأَتَكَ قَدْ عَلَّقَتْ رَجُلًا وَقَدْ عَزَمَتْ عَلَى قَتْلِكَ وَقَدْ وَقَفْتُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَمْرِهَا فَأَشْفَقْتُ عَلَيْكَ وَلَزِمَنِي نَصْحُكَ ، فَتَقَبَّلْتُ وَلَا تَعْتَرِ فَإِنَّهَا عَزَمَتْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ بِالْمُوسَى ، وَاسْتَعْرِفُ ذَلِكَ مِنْهَا ، فَمَا فِي أَمْرِهَا شَكٌّ فَتَنَاقَمَ الرَّجُلُ فِي بَيْتِهِ ، فَلَمَّا ظَنَّتْ امْرَأَتُهُ أَنَّهُ قَدْ نَامَ عَمَدَتْ إِلَى مُوسَى حَادَّةً وَهَوَتْ بِهِ لِتَحْلِقَ مِنْ حَلْقِهِ ثَلَاثَ شَعْرَاتٍ ، فَفَتَحَ الرَّجُلُ عَيْنَهُ فَرَأَاهَا وَقَدْ أَهَوَتْ بِالْمُوسَى إِلَى حَلْقِهِ فَلَمْ يَشْكُ فِي أَنَّهَا أَرَادَتْ قَتْلَهُ ، فَقَامَ إِلَيْهَا فَقَتَلَهَا وَقَتِلَ وَهَذَا كَثِيرٌ لَا يُخَصَى وَضَرَبَ آخَرَ مِنَ السَّحْرِ ، وَهُوَ الْاِخْتِيَالُ فِي إِطْعَامِهِ بَعْضَ الْأَدْوِيَةِ الْمُبْلَدَةِ الْمُؤَثِّرَةِ فِي الْعَقْلِ وَالذُّخْنِ الْمُسَدِّرَةِ الْمُسْكِرَةِ ، نَحْوُ دِمَاغِ الْجَمَارِ إِذَا طَعِمَهُ إِنْسَانٌ تَبَلَّدَ عَقْلُهُ وَقَلَّتْ فِطْنَتُهُ

مَعَ أَدْوِيَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ هِيَ مَذْكُورَةٌ فِي كُتُبِ الطَّبِّ ، وَيَتَوَصَّلُونَ إِلَى أَنْ يَجْعَلُوهُ فِي طَعَامٍ حَتَّى يَأْكُلَهُ فَتَذْهَبَ فِطْنَتُهُ وَيَجُوزَ عَلَيْهِ أَشْيَاءُ مِمَّا لَوْ كَانَ تَامَ الْفِطْنَةُ لَأَنْكَرَهَا ، فَيَقُولُ النَّاسُ : إِنَّهُ مَسْحُورٌ

وَحِكْمَةٌ كَافِيَةٌ تُبَيِّنُ لَكَ أَنَّ هَذَا كُلَّهُ مَخَارِيقُ وَحِيلٌ لَا حَقِيقَةَ لِمَا يَدَّعُونَ لَهَا أَنَّ السَّاجِرَ وَالْمُعَرَّمِ لَوْ قَدَرَا عَلَى مَا يَدَّعِيَانِهِ مِنَ النَّفْعِ وَالضَّرَرِ مِنَ الْوُجُوهِ الَّتِي يَدَّعُونَ وَأَمَكْنَهُمَا الطَّيْرَانُ وَالْعِلْمُ بِالْغُيُوبِ وَأَخْبَارِ الْبُلْدَانِ النَّائِيَةِ وَالْخَبِيئَاتِ وَالشَّرْقِ وَالْإِضْرَارِ بِالنَّاسِ مِنْ غَيْرِ الْوُجُوهِ الَّتِي ذَكَرْنَا ، لَقَدَرُوا عَلَى إِزَالَةِ الْمَمَالِكِ وَاسْتِخْرَاجِ الْكُنُوزِ وَالْغَلَبَةِ عَلَى الْبُلْدَانِ بِقَتْلِ الْمُلُوكِ بِحَيْثُ لَا يَبْدَأُهُمْ مَكْرُوهٌ ، وَلَمَّا مَسَّاهُمُ الشُّوءُ وَلَا امْتَنَعُوا عَنْ قَصْدِهِمْ بِمَكْرُوهٍ ، وَلَا سَتَعْنُوا عَنْ الطَّلَبِ لِمَا فِي أَيْدِي النَّاسِ فَإِذَا لَمْ يَكُنْ كَذَلِكَ وَكَانَ الْمُدَّعُونَ لِذَلِكَ أَشْوَأَ النَّاسِ حَالًا وَأَكْفَرَهُمْ طَمَعًا وَاحْتِيَالًا وَتَوَصُّلًا لِأَخْذِ ذَرَاهِمِ النَّاسِ وَأَظْهَرَهُمْ فَقْرًا وَإِمْلَاقًا عَلِمْتُ أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَرُؤُسَاءُ الْحَشُونِ وَالْجُهَالِ مِنَ الْعَامَّةِ مِنْ أَسْرَعَ النَّاسِ إِلَى التَّصْدِيقِ بِدَعَاوَى السَّحَرَةِ وَالْمُعَرَّمِينَ وَأَشَدَّهُمْ نَكِيرًا عَلَى مَنْ جَحَدَهَا ، وَيَزُودُونَ فِي ذَلِكَ أَخْبَارًا مُفْتَعَلَةً مُتَخَرِّصَةً يَعْتَقِدُونَ صِحَّتَهَا ، كَالْحَدِيثِ الَّذِي يَزُودُونَ أَنَّ امْرَأَةً أَتَتْ عَائِشَةَ فَقَالَتْ : إِنِّي سَاحِرَةٌ فَهَلْ لِي تَوْبَةٌ؟ فَقَالَتْ : وَمَا سِحْرُكَ؟ قَالَتْ : سِرْتُ إِلَى الْمَوْضِعِ الَّذِي فِيهِ هَارُوثُ وَمَارُوثُ بِبَابِ لَطَلَبِ عِلْمِ السَّحْرِ فَقَالَا لِي : يَا أُمَّةَ اللَّهِ لَا تَخْتَارِي عَذَابَ الْآخِرَةِ بِأَمْرِ الدُّنْيَا فَأَتَيْتُ ، فَقَالَا لِي : اذْهَبِي فَبُولِي عَلَى ذَلِكَ الرَّمَادِ فَذَهَبَتْ لِابْتُولَ عَلَيْهِ فَفَكَرْتُ فِي نَفْسِي فَقُلْتُ لَا فَعَلْتُ وَجِئْتُ إِلَيْهِمَا فَقُلْتُ : قَدْ فَعَلْتُ ، فَقَالَا : مَا رَأَيْتُ؟ فَقُلْتُ : مَا رَأَيْتُ شَيْئًا ؛ فَقَالَا : اذْهَبِي فَبُولِي عَلَيْهِ فَذَهَبْتُ وَفَعَلْتُ فَرَأَيْتُ كَأَنَّ فَارِسًا قَدْ خَرَجَ مِنْ فَرْجِي مُقْتَنًا بِالْحَدِيدِ حَتَّى صَعِدَ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ ، فَجِئْتُهُمَا فَأَخْبَرْتُهُمَا فَقَالَا : ذَلِكَ إِيْمَانُكَ خَرَجَ عَنْكَ وَقَدْ أَحْسَنْتِ السَّحَرَ فَقُلْتُ : وَمَا هُوَ؟ فَقَالَا : لَا تُرِيدِينَ شَيْئًا فَتَصَوَّرِيْنَهُ فِي وَهْمِكَ إِلَّا كَانَ فَصَوَّرْتَ فِي نَفْسِي حَبًّا مِنْ جَنْطَةٍ ، فَإِذَا أَنَا بِالْحَبِّ فَقُلْتُ لَهُ : انْزِرْ فَانْزَرَ وَأَخْرَجَ مِنْ سَاعِيْتِهِ شَيْئًا ، فَقُلْتُ لَهُ : انْطَلِحْ وَانْخَبِرْ إِلَى آخِرِ الْأَمْرِ حَتَّى صَارَ خُبْرًا وَإِنِّي كُنْتُ لَا أَصَوِّرُ فِي نَفْسِي شَيْئًا إِلَّا كَانَ فَقَالَتْ لَهَا عَائِشَةُ : لَيْسَتْ لَكَ تَوْبَةٌ فَيَرْوِي الْقُصَاصُ وَالْمُحَدِّثُونَ الْجُهَالُ مِثْلَ هَذَا لِلْعَامَّةِ ، فَتَصَدَّقُهُ وَتَسْتَعِيدُهُ وَتَسْأَلُهُ أَنْ يُحَدِّثَهَا بِحَدِيثِ سَاحِرَةِ ابْنِ هُبَيْرَةَ ، فَيَقُولُ لَهَا : إِنَّ ابْنَ هُبَيْرَةَ أَخَذَ سَاحِرَةً فَأَقْرَتْ لَهُ بِالسَّحْرِ ، فَدَعَا الْفُقَهَاءَ فَسَأَلَهُمْ عَنْ حُكْمِهَا ، فَقَالُوا : الْقَتْلُ فَقَالَ ابْنُ هُبَيْرَةَ : لَسْتُ أَقْتُلُهَا إِلَّا تَغْرِيقًا قَالَ : فَأَخَذَ رَحَى الْبَذْرِ فَشَدَّهَا فِي رِجْلِهَا وَقَذَفَهَا فِي الْفُرَاتِ ، فَقَامَتْ فَوْقَ الْمَاءِ مَعَ الْحَجَرِ ، فَجَعَلَتْ تَنْحَدِرُ مَعَ الْمَاءِ ، فَخَافُوا أَنْ تَفُوتَهُمْ ، فَقَالَ ابْنُ هُبَيْرَةَ : مَنْ يُمَسِّكُهَا وَلَهُ كَذَا وَكَذَا؟ فَرَغَبَ رَجُلٌ مِنَ السَّحَرَةِ كَانَ حَاضِرًا فِيْمَا بِذَلِكَ فَقَالَ : أَعْطُونِي قَدَحَ زُجَاجٍ فِيهِ مَاءٌ فَجَاءُوهُ بِهِ ، فَقَعَدَ عَلَى الْقَدَحِ وَمَضَى إِلَى الْحَجَرِ فَشَقَّ الْحَجَرَ بِالْقَدَحِ فَتَقَطَّعَ الْحَجَرُ قِطْعَةً قِطْعَةً ، فَغَرِقَتِ السَّاحِرَةُ فَيُصَدِّقُونَهُ

وَمَنْ صَدَّقَ هَذَا فَلَيْسَ يَعْرِفُ النُّبُوَّةَ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ أَنْ تَكُونَ مُعْجَزَاتُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ مِنْ هَذَا النَّوعِ وَأَنْتَهُمْ كَانُوا سَحَرَةً وَقَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى { وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاجِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَى }

وَقَدْ أَجَازُوا مِنْ فِعْلِ السَّاجِرِ مَا هُوَ أَطْمَ مِنْ هَذَا وَأَفْطَحَ , وَذَلِكَ أَنَّتَهُمْ زَعَمُوا أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ سَجَرَ , وَأَنَّ السَّحَرَ عَمِلَ فِيهِ حَتَّى قَالَ فِيهِ : { إِنَّهُ يُتَخَيَّلُ لِي أَنِّي أَقُولُ الشَّيْءَ وَأَفْعَلُهُ وَلَمْ أَقُلْهُ وَلَمْ أَفْعَلْهُ } وَأَنَّ امْرَأَةً يَهُودِيَّةً سَحَرَتْهُ فِي جُفِّ طَلْعَةٍ وَمُشْطٍ وَمُشَاقِقَةٍ , حَتَّى أَتَاهُ جَبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَأَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّهَا سَحَرَتْهُ فِي جُفِّ طَلْعَةٍ وَهُوَ تَحْتَ رَاغُوفَةِ الْبَيْرِ , فَاسْتُخْرِجَ وَزَالَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ذَلِكَ الْعَارِضُ

وَقَدْ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مُكَذِّبًا لِلْكَفَّارِ فِيمَا ادَّعَوْهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ , فَقَالَ جَلُّ مِنْ قَائِلٍ : { وَقَالَ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا } وَمِثْلُ هَذِهِ الْأَخْبَارِ مِنْ وَضْعِ الْمُلْحِدِينَ تَلْعَبًا بِالْحَشْوِ الطَّغَامِ وَاسْتِجْزَارًا لَهُمْ إِلَى الْقَوْلِ بِإِطْلَالِ مُعْجَزَاتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ وَالْقَدْحِ فِيهَا , وَأَنَّهُ لَا فَرْقَ بَيْنَ مُعْجَزَاتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَفِعْلِ السَّحَرَةِ , وَأَنَّ جَمِيعَهُ مِنْ نَوْعٍ وَاحِدٍ وَالْعَجَبُ مِمَّنْ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَ تَصْدِيقِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ وَإِثْبَاتِ مُعْجَزَاتِهِمْ وَبَيْنَ التَّصْدِيقِ بِمِثْلِ هَذَا مِنْ فِعْلِ السَّحَرَةِ مَعَ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى : { وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاجِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَى } فَصَدَّقَ هَؤُلَاءِ مَنْ كَذَّبَهُ اللَّهُ وَأَخْبَرَ بِطُلَانِ دَعْوَاهُ وَاتِّخَالِهِ وَجَائِزُ أَنْ تَكُونَ الْمَرْأَةُ الْيَهُودِيَّةُ بِجَهْلِهَا فَعَلَتْ ذَلِكَ طَنًا مِنْهَا بِأَنَّ ذَلِكَ يَعْمَلُ فِي الْأَجْسَادِ . وَقَصَدَتْ بِهِ النَّبِيَّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ : فَأُطْلِعَ اللَّهُ نَبِيَّهُ عَلَى مَوْضِعِ سِرِّهَا وَأَظْهَرَ جَهْلَهَا فِيمَا ارْتَكَبَتْ وَظَنَّتْ لِيَكُونَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ دَلَائِلِ نُبُوَّتِهِ , لِأَنَّ ذَلِكَ ضَرُّهُ وَخَلَطَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُهُ وَلَمْ يَقُلْ كُلُّ الرُّوَاةِ إِنَّهُ اخْتَلَطَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُهُ , وَإِنَّمَا هَذَا اللَّفْظُ زَيْدٌ فِي الْحَدِيثِ وَلَا أَصْلَ لَهُ وَالْفَرْقُ بَيْنَ مُعْجَزَاتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَبَيْنَ مَا ذَكَرْنَا مِنْ وُجُوهِ التَّخْيِيلَاتِ , أَنَّ مُعْجَزَاتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ هِيَ عَلَى حَقَائِقِهَا , وَبَوَاطِنُهَا كَظَوَاهِرِهَا , وَكُلَّمَا تَأَمَّلْتَهَا ازْدَدْتَ بَصِيرَةً فِي صِحَّتِهَا وَلَوْ جَهَدَ الْخَلْقُ كُلُّهُمْ عَلَى مُضَاهَاتِهَا وَمُقَابَلَتِهَا بِأَمْثَالِهَا ظَهَرَ عَجْزُهُمْ عَنْهَا ; وَمَخَارِيقُ السَّحَرَةِ وَتَخْيِيلَاتُهُمْ إِنَّمَا هِيَ ضَرْبٌ مِنَ الْحِيلَةِ وَالتَّلَطُّفِ لِإِظْهَارِ أُمُورٍ لَا حَقِيقَةَ لَهَا , وَمَا يَظْهَرُ مِنْهَا عَلَى غَيْرِ حَقِيقَتِهَا , يُعْرِفُ ذَلِكَ بِالتَّأَمُّلِ وَالتَّبَحُّثِ وَمَتَى شَاءَ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمَ ذَلِكَ بَلَغَ فُؤَادُهُ مَبْلَغَ غَيْرِهِ وَيَأْتِي بِمِثْلِ مَا أَظْهَرَهُ سِوَاهُ

“Allah ﷻ said: And they followed what the devils recited in the Kingdom of Sulaiman, and Sulaiman didn't disbelieve – to the end of the story.

We have to give an introduction to the discussion of السحر *sibr* (magic), as the topic is unknown to many scholars and accordingly also to many laymen, followed by the verdict to magic in accordance with the verse from its meaning and verdict. So, we say that linguists say the word *magic* denotes something easy to digest and whose cause is hidden. Magic is according to them a meal because it is hidden and has a smooth passage. Labid said: "We show two aspects which belong to something unseen when we are fed and drink," and it is said: There are two dimensions:

- 1) We hallucinate and are deceived like someone who is bewitched and tricked.
- 2) And the other: We are fed. And in both cases, the meaning is something hidden. Someone said: If you ask me *who are we?* We are sparrows from amongst these enchanted creatures. And this designation encompasses the meaning of the first and also that the intended *musabhar* is lungs and that, which is associated with the throat, and it is derived from the meaning hidden.

And Aisha said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died between *sabri* and *nabri*, i.e., *between my lap and my chest*. And Allah ﷻ said: 'Verily, you are amongst the *musabbateen*,' i.e., *creatures who eat and drink*, and Allah's statement point towards this when He said: 'You are but a man like us,' like His statement: 'What is it with this messenger, he eats food and walks around the markets.' And it entails that he has *sibrin* just like us. The word *sibr* is mentioned in similar topics meaning the weakness of the body and its imperfection which characterizes man, so whosoever is described as such is weak and dependent.

This is the linguistic meaning of *sibr*. Then, the word is used about everything which has a hidden cause and notions which are different from their reality; camouflage and deception. When the word is employed isolated, then it's associated with something reprehensible, whereas when it's used as a description of something else, then it's associated with something praiseworthy, as narrated: *Some speech is magic*.

Abdul-Baqi' narrated and said: Ibrahim al-Harrani narrated and said: Sulaiman Bin Harb narrated and said: Hammad Bin Zayd narrated on the authority of Muhammad Bin Zubayr said: Az-Zibraan Bin Badr,

'Amru Bin al-Ahtam, and Qays Bin 'Asim came to the Prophet ﷺ, and he ﷺ said to 'Amru: 'Tell me about az-Zibriqan.' He said: 'He is obeyed in his assemblies, strong concerning support, and doesn't care about that which doesn't concern him.' then az-Zibriqan said: 'He, by Allah, knows that I am better than him' Then 'Amru said: 'He has no humanity, he is cheap, his father is an idiot, and his maternal brother is evil. O Messenger of Allah, I'm telling the truth. He pleased me, so I said the best things, I knew about him, and when he humiliated me, I said the worst things, I know about him.' He ﷺ then said: 'Some speech is magic.'

Ibrahim al-Harrani narrated and said: Mu'sab ibn 'Abdullah narrated and said: Malik Bin Anas narrated from Zayd Bin Aslam who narrated from Ibn' Umar and said: 'Two men arrived. One of them held a speech, and people were mesmerized, then the Messenger of Allah said: 'Some speech is magic.'

Muhammad Bin Bakr narrated and said: Abu Dawud narrated and said: Muhammad Bin Yahya Bin Faris narrated and said: Sa'id Bin Muhammad narrated and said: Abu Tumailah narrated and said: Abu Ja'far an-Nahwi 'Abdullah Bin Thabit narrated and said: Sakhr Bin 'Abdullah Bin Burayda narrated from his father from his grandfather: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: 'Some speech is magic, some knowledge is ignorance, some poetry is wisdom, and some speech is heavy.'

Sa's'ah Bin Suhan said: 'The Prophet of Allah spoke the truth. He said: *Some speech is magic*, as a man can have a claim hanging over his head, but he is better than his counterparty, who is right, with regards to presenting arguments, and thus he mesmerizes people with his speech, and people think he is right.'

As for his statement: *Some knowledge is ignorance*, the knowledge of the scholar will be burdened with what he doesn't know, rendering him ignorant. As for his statement: *Some poetry is wisdom*; it contains examples and teachings from which people learn.

As for his statement: *Some speech is heavy*, it's honoring what you express, and your speech about people regarding what doesn't concern you, and

that which people don't want (you to talk about), the Prophet ﷺ termed this as some speech is magic, because it's related to clarifying a rightful claim and presenting it in the best manner after it was unknown. This is permissible magic which the Prophet approved in the case of 'Amru Bin al-Ahtam, as he didn't criticize him for it.

It was narrated that a man was very eloquent with 'Umar Bin 'Abdulazeez, so 'Umar said: *By Allah, this is permissible magic.*

Sibr denotes the situation where falsehood is presented as the truth through speech and deceiving the listeners through manipulation and a word that encompasses every twisted, false thing that isn't real and isn't proven. Allah ﷻ said: *They enchanted the eyes of people*, i.e., they twisted the reality to the extent that people believed their staffs and ropes were moving. Moreover, He ﷻ said: *It appeared to him as if they were moving*. Here, we are informed that the things he thought were moving actually weren't moving, and it was merely something he imagined. Moreover, it is said that their staffs were hollowed out and filled with mercury. And their ropes were made of goatskin leather and also filled up with mercury. Also, before the event, they had dug small holes under the area and made bonfires which they ignited with much fire. So, when they threw their ropes and staffs, these were exposed to heat, and the mercury was heated, and they began to move because this is an ability of mercury when it is heated, it expands. So, Allah informed us that this was merely an optical illusion and not reality. And the Arabs say (an enchanted blow with jewelry), i.e., it's an optical illusion for the spectators enchanting their eyes. Truthful statements which are used for clarification are termed permissible magic. Whereas if the intention is optical illusions, deception, or to present falsehood as the truth, then it's termed a reprehensible kind of magic.

If someone should ask: *If the topic of magic entails illusions and tricks, how is it then that something that clarifies the truth and is built on truth can be termed magic? In this case, one displays what is hidden, rather than to hide what is apparent, while the displayed isn't reality?* The answer would be: *This is termed magic due to the majority of the listeners, if they were introduced to the meaning with a reprehensive wording without clarification, then none of them would accept it or listen to it. Whereas when one hears the words being used in a positive sense, it is accepted willingly where the meaning isn't corrupted nor reprehensive. This leads to*

a formulation of the speech and a beautiful representation, as nobody listens to the sluggish speech, which isn't eloquent, nor is it accepted. So, the hearts drawing near to the expression is termed sihr, just like when a magician draws near the hearts of the spectators to his illusions. From this perspective, eloquent speech is termed magic, and not from the one you assume. And eloquent speech can be termed magic because the one who can express himself articulately, might have presented something as ugly which was beautiful or something beautiful as ugly which is why it is termed magic, just like it is termed magic when someone creates an illusion and presents something different than its reality.

The word *sihr* is employed about the eloquent speech figuratively, it doesn't have a reality, and the reality is as described. This is why it was said that everything related to illusions is what is meant; i.e., deception, to disguise something and present something which isn't real nor can be proven. If we clarify the linguistical origin of the word *sihr*, and what is meant by it, what the word entails, then we've covered this in the introduction to the word and what is meant by it.

Magic is divided into different kinds, one of them is the magic of the people of Babylon which Allah ﷻ mentions *They taught people magic and what was sent with the angels in the Babylon of Harut and Marut*, and they were a Sabian people who used to worship 7 planets and call them gods, and they believed that all the events in the world were the doing of these planets. They set aside the Creator, as they didn't acknowledge the Creator of the planets and the universe. And it was to them Ibrahim ؑ, Allah's close friend, was sent. He discussed with them and presented arguments which rendered them speechless, and when they were unable to reply, they decided to throw him into a bonfire of which Allah ﷻ made the fire cold and safe for him. After this, Allah ordered him to emigrate to the Levant. The people of Babylon and the areas Iraq, the Levant, Egypt, and Rome believed in this doctrine until the time of Bayvarasb whom the Arabs call ad-Dahhak.

They also believed that Afridun who was amongst the people of Danbavand mobilized an army against him and wrote to everyone who obeyed him. And there are tall tales about him until the end of his Kingdom, and he captured him. The ignorant masses and the women amongst us claim that Afridun trapped Bayvarasb inside the mountain Danbavand on top of the mountain and that he lives there as a prisoner,

and the sorcerers came to him and received magic from him. And he will escape from there and rule on earth. Moreover, (they believe) he is ad-Dajjal whom the Prophet ﷺ informed and warned us about, and I think they have these ideas from the Majus. The Kingdom Iqlim became Babylon under the Persians. Then some of their Kings settled there. And they didn't worship idols; instead, they were monotheists who only acknowledged Allah except that they sanctified the four elements; Earth, Water, Wind, and Fire, as they are useful for the creation, and with them the animals are strong. With time, they became Majus under the rule of Kishtasab when Zardusht called him, he accepted his call with conditions which are too long to explain. We provide this background to clarify how the magicians of Babylon were.

When the Persian became dominant in al-Iqlim, they killed and destroyed the sorcerers. This continued with them and their way of life after they became Majus and before this as well until the King disappeared. The people of Babylon, before the Persians came to them, were known for possessing knowledge about deception, how to sow discord, and astrology. And they worshipped statues which they named after the seven planets. And each of them had their own temple where the statues were kept. And they drew near to them through rituals according to their belief. They also sought approval from the planet that they requested because they claimed that this planet determined good and evil. So, whosoever wished for something good and success; then he would claim that he is drawing near to it by buying (things to sacrifice), incense, incantations, and tying knots and blowing on them. And the one who wishes for something evil, war, death, and destruction for others, claims that he is drawing near to Zuhā (Venus) through the things it is pleased with, and the one who wishes for lightning, fire, or a fatal disease (for someone else) claims that he is drawing near to al-Marikh (Mars) with what it is pleased with of animal sacrifices. And all these incantations in Nabatean (a language) intend to glorify these planets to get what they want of good and evil, and love and hate, then the planets will provide what they wish for them. They claim that by doing so, they receive what they want without touching or being in contact with it besides bringing sacrifices to the planets, as they have been told to do. Amongst the masses, there are those who claim that it can turn a human being into a donkey or a dog, and afterward, if one likes, back to normal again. One can ride on a broomstick or a barrel,

after which one is flying in the air and for instance, pass from Iraq to India or any other country and back again at night.

The masses used to believe this because they used to worship the planets, and they believed in everything that was related to sanctifying them. So the magicians used to deceive them, by deceiving the eyes of the masses, so that they thought it was the truth, as they wouldn't be able to do so otherwise, and nobody would benefit from it or achieve what they did except the ones who believed in the claims of the sorcerers. They confirmed what they said, and their Kings didn't oppose it. The sorcerers used to have a special status with the masses, a mighty status. Moreover, the Kings used to believe in the prayer of the sorcerers to the planets until these Kingdoms ended. Haven't you seen that people in the time of Pharaoh competed against each other in the fields of knowledge, magic, deception, and the unusual, and then Musa was sent to them with his staff, and his Signs which the sorcerers knew wasn't magic which only Allah ﷻ could provide for them. After this, these Kingdoms ended, and the monotheists who came to power searched for the sorcerers and drew near to Allah ﷻ by killing them. The sorcerers used to call the masses and the ignorant in hiding, like many of them do today who call women, the young ones, the elderly, and the ignorant amongst them. They used to claim to the ones they taught that they must believe, what they say, and that they must bear witness of its truth. And the ones, who believe in the sorcerers, commit disbelief (kufr) for different reasons:

The first reason: The confirmation of the necessity of the sanctification of the planets and calling them Gods.

The second: One must bear witness that the planets can benefit or harm.

The third: The belief that the sorcerers have abilities which are equal to the miracles of the Prophets. So Allah sent two angels to them in order to clarify to the people the truth behind their call and its falsehood and to uncover the things they were deceived by, informing them of the meaning of these incantations, and that it entails associating something with Allah (shirk) and disbelief (kufr), and their optical illusions which the sorcerers used to deceive the masses with. They revealed their reality, and they forbade them to accept it and act on it; therefore, the statement of Allah *We are merely a trial, so don't disbelieve*. And this is the

origin of the magic of the people of Babylon. Despite this, they used to employ different kinds of magic and deception as mentioned, and they manipulated the masses and gave the planets credit for it so that people didn't look for the cause anywhere else and submitted to them. So, magic mainly consists of conceptions, which include deception. Some of it is common knowledge, and the hidden is beautified, and its inner parts aren't known except by those who know them, because knowledge should encompass the apparent and the hidden as well as the light and the dark.

So, the apparent is known by all who sees and hears it amongst the wise, and the hidden and the dark is only known by its people and those who are committed to knowing it and examine it. And this is like what a sailor on a ship imagines when he is sailing on a river, he sees a coast with palm trees and buildings along with it which follow him. And this is like when someone sees the moon being blown towards North due to a cloud being blown towards South. And like a spinning top with a dot on it spinning and it looks like a line all the way around it. And like a handmill, if it's spinning fast. And like the edge of burning coal when it is ignited, one sees the fires as a line all the way around it. And like looking at a grape that is magnified in a glass of water like a peach and a pear. And like a little person who is magnified by fog. And like vapor from the ground through which a solar disc is magnified, whereas without the vapor it's small, and like things in water seem to be broken or bent, and like a ring seems the size of a bracelet if one closes one of the eyes.

And there are numerous other examples of things which seem to be different than they really are, and people generally know them, and there are other more complicated things and only the committed and the ones who examine things thoroughly know about them such as the thread of a magician that changes color between red, yellow, and black. And a charlatan moves very specially and precisely to disguise reality to the extent that one sees a bird with him which he slaughters, and afterward one sees the bird flying. This is performed with hidden movements, and the bird that was slaughtered isn't the same as the one seen flying, because he has two birds. He hides one of them and displays the other one. He ensures that nobody sees him hide the bird with hidden movements, and then he presents a bird that is identical to

the first one. Moreover, it is displayed as if someone is being sawed in half, and that a sword is swallowed through the mouth, but none of this is real. Also, in this category, we have productions of brass and other things. So, one sees two horsemen fighting, and one of them kills the other one, and the trick ends; and there were preparations made for this. Also, likewise, the brass horseman on a horse has a trumpet which is blown every time an hour has passed without anyone touching him or coming near him.

Al-Kalbi mentioned that a man from the army went hunting to some areas in Shaam, and along with him, he had a dog and a servant. The dog was tempted by a fox and chased it. The fox ran into a hole in a hill, and the dog ran followed it and didn't come out. The man ordered the servant to go and get it. The servant went in after the dog and didn't come out. The soldier was about to go in after them when a man passed by. The soldier told the man about the fox, the dog, and the servant, and that none of them came out again. The man took the soldier by his hand and led him into the hole. He brought him through a long tunnel until they reached a house. The man provided light. Then he said to the soldier: 'Look, the dog, the servant, and the fox are dead.' In the middle of the house was an iron statue of a man with a sword in its hand. The man said to the soldier: 'Don't you see that even if 1000 men entered, he would kill them all?' The soldier asked: 'How so?' He answered: 'Because they would be forced to do so in a specific manner, and when one steps down, the covered man will strike one with his sword. So, you need to come down to him in a different manner.' The soldier asked: 'How am I to trick him?' The man answered: 'You should dig a tunnel which will allow you to reach him from behind the hill, then he won't move.' The soldier began to dig and dug a tunnel to the backside of the hill, and the man covered by brass or something else didn't move. The soldier took the sword and killed him.

He saw another door in this house and opened it. It was as some tombs of dead Kings on the bed there.'

There are numerous examples like this, and amongst them are productions that represent the Romans and the Indians where the observer is unable to distinguish between them and real people. The person who doesn't examine this in depth does not doubt that they are

people, even though they are presented as laughing or crying, also though one can clearly see if the laughter is due to shame, happiness, and evil.

These are the facets of the complex and hidden and also what we mentioned earlier of tricks. The magic of Pharaoh's sorcerers was of this type, as we have already clarified with regards to their ropes and staffs which we mentioned belonged to the religion of the people of Babylon in the past along with their magic and tricks. Some of this we've heard from people of knowledge and some of it we've found in books translated from Nabatean to Arabic. Amongst these, there is a book that describes their magic and its types. All of it is based on the foundation we mentioned earlier regarding their sacrifices to the planets, their sanctification of them, and their superstition regarding them which isn't even worth mentioning, and there isn't any benefit in it.

Also, there is another kind of magic: Those, who chant incantations belonging to Jinn and devils (according to them), and (they believe) they obey them due to these incantations and spells, and they achieve what they want through these sacrifices and agreements. People were hostile towards them due to this, and such were the affairs of the sorcerers amongst the Arabs before Islam, and most of the miracles of al-Hallaj were due to agreements (according to the myths). If this book contained any form of documentation, then I would have mentioned what it contains regarding his miracles and others like him.

The harm of the people of incantations and their sowing discord between people is not a light thing, and this is due to, they (so they claim) enter people through Jinn who obeys them through incantations including Allah's names, so they request with these whatever they want, and the Jinn go out against whosoever they wish. The masses believe them due to the power, they think, these possess over Jinn through the names of Allah, the Most Exalted, which was why Sulaiman Bin Dawud عليه السلام was obeyed, and because they (the Jinn) reveal secrets to them and steal for them. Al-Mu'tadid Billah in all his majesty, chivalry, and abundance of intelligence was deceived by these, as mentioned by the historians. This occurred as a man with a sword in his hand showed up on various occasions in his home when nobody else was there. Usually,

it was around noon. If he was asked, he didn't find him even after thorough searches, and yet he saw him repeatedly. He, therefore, became worried and sent for some exorcists who brought with them some men and women about whom they claimed some of them were possessed, and some were healthy. He ordered some of the leaders to cast a spell, after which one of them cast a spell on a man about whom he claimed was healthy, and after the incantation, he became crazy and possessed, while he was looking at him.

They told him that it's a very demanding and challenging science; if one wants the Jinn to obey you and possess a healthy person, and that it depends on the person chanting the spells and likewise the healthy person who allows himself to become crazy and then possessed. Al-Mu'tadid believed what they had told him, but he distanced himself from it and hated it. However, he did ask them about the man who appeared in his home.

They crossed various limits concerning things that his heart was attached to; besides the question, he had for them. He then ordered them to leave him and that all the participants each should receive 5 dirhams. Afterward, he avoided what he could and ordered a wall to be built surrounding his house that couldn't be climbed. On top of the wall, he placed control posts to trick (or force) the intruder into revealing himself. After this, nobody entered without reporting first until al-Mu'tadid died. I saw these abandoned control posts on top of the thick wall that al-Mu'tadid ordered built, so I asked a friend about the matter; was this person ever revealed to al-Mu'tadid, or did he stay hidden?

He told me that the matter wasn't clear until the time of al-Muqtadir. This person was a white servant named Yaqiq, and he had a crush on some of the slavegirls in the harem. He used to disguise himself with different beards one couldn't tell were false, and at times he would appear with a sword in his hand, and at times with another weapon.

When there was a search for him, he hid amongst the trees in the garden or some of the small passages. When he was out of sight, he removed the beard and hid it in his sleeve. He would then draw his sword instead and pretend to be one of the servants looking for the

wanted person. If they asked him, if he had seen the wanted person, he would reply: 'I haven't seen anyone.' If there were anxiety inside the house, he would use it as a pretext to enter, see the slavegirls, and talk to them asking what was going on.

He continued like this until the time of al-Muqtadir. Afterward, he traveled and settled in Tarsus and stayed there until he died. Afterward, a slavegirl narrated his story and revealed his tricks. So, this servant deceived everyone with such tricks which weren't revealed by anyone in spite of all the efforts of al-Mu'tadid and it took help in the guise of insider knowledge to reveal them, even though they weren't advanced tricks. How is it then with those who have built their livelihood and an entire industry on such tricks?

Another kind of magic entails gossip, slander, rhetorics, corruption, and various dirty tricks, and this is common knowledge. It was narrated that a woman wanted to break up a married couple, so she went to the wife and said: 'Your husband has been bewitched and taken away from you, and I'll bewitch him to the extent that he doesn't want or looks at others than you, but you'll have to shave tree hairs from his throat while he is sleeping and give them to me.'

The words of the woman deceived the wife. Afterward, the woman went to the man and said: 'Your wife has a relationship with another man, and she is firmly determined to kill you. I found out, and I felt sorry for you, so I felt I had to warn you. Beware and don't get deceived; she is planning to use a razor blade, then you shall know when it happens.' The man didn't doubt the woman and went to sleep at home, and when the wife thought he was asleep, she brought a sharp razor blade to shave off the three hairs from his throat. The man opened his eyes, and now he didn't doubt that she wanted to kill him, so he got up and killed her. Many people get killed in this manner. Another kind of magic is to manipulate the food and drinks of people. There are means and drugs which influence the mind tremendously, smoke that confuses and create hallucinations, drugs that dulls the mind all this is mentioned in the books on medicine. If one put some of these things in someone's food, and the person was to eat it, then the person's mind would disappear, and it would be possible to do

things to this person that which the person normally would reject, and people would say: 'He is bewitched.'

Sufficient wisdom shall clarify for you that all these things are merely tricks and deception; what they claim sorcerers and the like have of abilities isn't real; it doesn't exist. If sorcerers and the like had these abilities regarding benefit and harm, the ability to fly, access to knowledge about the Unseen, the ability to see what is happening in distant countries, to corrupt, rob, and hurt people, as we have mentioned earlier then they would be able to remove the Kingdoms, extract the treasures, and conquer the countries by killing the Kings. They would also be wealthy merely by requesting the possessions of people. This is, however, not the case, and these imposters are instead in the worst condition amongst people and strive to receive a *dirham* (a currency) from people which clearly shows, they are poor. So, I've realized that they aren't able to do any of this. The leaders of the fools and ignorant are the first to confirm the claims of the sorcerers, while the most critical of people reject them. They narrate a story; they believe to be true, about a woman who came to 'Aisha and said: 'I am a sorceress, is it possible for me to repent?' She asked: 'What is your magic?' The woman replied: 'I went to the place of Harut and Marut to learn magic, and they said to me: 'O slave of Allah, don't choose punishment in the Hereafter due to affairs of this world.' And then they said: 'Go to this ash tree and urinate on it.' I went to the tree and thought to myself, so I didn't do it, and I returned to them and told them: 'I've done it.' They asked: 'What did you see?' I said: 'I didn't see anything.' They said: 'Go and urinate on it.' I went to the tree and urinated on it, and it seemed like a horseman came out of my vagina and rose to heaven. I went to the two and informed them. They said: 'That was your belief (iman) leaving you, and you have mastered magic.' I asked: 'And what is that?' The replied: 'There is nothing you want, and you imagine it, except you shall receive it.' So, I imagined the love for barley. I said to it: 'Be planted.' Then it got planted, and a twig appeared from it. Then I said to it: 'Be ground and be baked' until it became bread. So, there wasn't anything I imagined except it happened.' Then 'Aisha said to her: "There is no repentance for you.' The ignorant storytellers and narrators narrate such hoaxes to people. People confirm, retell, and ask about the sorcerers of Ibn Hubayrah, and they say to people: "Ibn Hubayrah took hold of a sorceress and

accused her of practicing magic.' Then he sent for scholars to ask what her verdict should be. They said: 'Death penalty.' Then Ibn Hubayrah said: 'I shall drown her.' He took a millstone and tied it to her foot and threw the stone in the Euphrates river. Afterward, she rose to the surface with the stone. They feared she would escape them, so Ibn Hubayrah said: 'Who can handle her, they shall receive this and that?' A man who was interested in magic was present and said: 'Give me a glass of water.' Someone brought it to him. He squashed the glass and went to the stone. Then he cut the stone with the glass, and it was sliced into bits and pieces. Then the sorceress drowned, and they believed him."

The one who confirms this has no knowledge of Prophethood, doesn't believe that Prophets receive miracles of this sort, and that they are sorcerers. Allah ﷻ said:

وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السَّاجِرُ حَيْثُ أَتَى

"Never shall sorcerers be successful no matter where they go."

They give authority to the practice of the sorcerers, and what is worse. This is due to their claim that the Prophet ﷺ was influenced by magic, and that magic worked on him to the extent that it is said: 'He imagined that he said and did things which he didn't do.' Also, that the Jewish woman bewitched him with spathe, hairs, and a comb until Jibril ﷺ came to him ﷺ and informed him ﷺ that his spell was in a well, after which the spell was broken.

Allah ﷻ said while accusing the non-Muslims of being liars due to what they said about the Prophet ﷺ: *And the wrongdoers say, you follow but a bewitched man.*

Also, corresponding to this are the fabricated narrations by the atheists; the inferior people amongst them joke with and mock the miracles of the Prophets and claim that there isn't any difference between magic and miracles and that they are of the same kind. It's a paradox that they unite the confirmation of the Messengers and the practice of the sorcerers with the statement of Allah: *And sorcerers shall never be successful* as they confirm what Allah has invalidated, and they narrate what has been proven false and allow that a Jewish woman in her ignorance

could perform magic that could affect bodies, and that this influenced the Prophet ﷺ; followed by Allah ﷻ informing His Prophet about the location of her secret and announced her ignorance with regards to the deed, and she thought it could be used as evidence for Prophethood because it influenced him and he became confused, and not all the narrators said that he became confused. This is a baseless addition to the narration. The difference between the miracles of the Prophets and what we've mentioned of different kinds of deception is, that the miracles of the Prophets are real, and everything one examines about it through sight confirms its truth, and if the entire creation should exert itself to its utmost to compete with them, the entire creation would never be able to do it. The supernatural abilities and illusions of the sorcerers are merely a kind of deception and entertainment where they present something that isn't real. And the transparent part, besides what is on the surface level, is known through thorough investigation and reflection, and the one who examines thoroughly will be able to become as skillful as the magicians." – End of the excerpt from the work by al-Jassas.

Conclusion

There isn't any rational justification for the idea of magic, and there isn't any justification by the authentic, Islamic texts. Some verses are interpreted in light of superstition to confirm superstition. This is invalid.

Some Muslims employ an incoherent interpretation of verses in light of rhetorics, themes, and discourses.

A wrongful appeal is made to the number of people who believed in magic due to an understanding of reality more than 1000 years ago. It's not justified for people in the present to push an obsolete understanding of the reality onto the Islamic texts.

Weak narrations are employed, narrations which should be rejected, and thus there isn't any textual justification for the idea of magic in an Islamic context.

People who are irrationally clinging onto the idea that magic along with its supernatural effect that separates man from his wife, instead of

searching for hidden objects and Voodoo dolls they should pay attention to:

- a) People pointing out the errors of their spouses.
- b) People who create mistrust between spouses.
- c) People who give false hope of a better future without the spouse (The grass is always greener on the other side, insecurity about the future, talking to people's egos, etc.)

This would be a step in the right direction on the path to deal with the disclaiming of responsibility, which occurs as a consequence of the idea of magic.

The Evil Eye

The idea of the Evil Eye has been present in many cultures and can be traced back to approximately 3300 BC which is why it's hardly a surprise that some Muslims confused the idea about envy in the Islamic text with the idea of the superstitious, Evil Eye.

An envious person can be termed as having an evil eye. The reason for the envy might be that person A possesses something that person B likes rendering B envious with an evil eye which leads to B trying to bring harm to A.

The idea of the Evil Eye in a superstitious mode is that person A possesses something which person B becomes envious due to, after which an invisible force shoots from the very soul of person B and strikes person A.

Texts employed as arguments for the existence of the Evil Eye

The proponents of the Evil Eye being an Islamic concept use the following evidence:

When Allah ﷻ ordered us to seek refuge from several things including:

﴿وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ﴾

“And from the evil of the envious when he envies.” (113:5)

﴿وَقَالَ يَا بَنِيَّ لَا تَدْخُلُوا مِنْ بَابٍ وَاحِدٍ وَادْخُلُوا مِنْ أَبْوَابٍ مُتَفَرِّقَةٍ ... وَإِنَّهُ لَدُوٌّ عَلِيمٌ لَمَّا عَلَّمْنَاهُ﴾

“He (Ya'qub) said: 'O my children, don't enter all of you through the same door, enter using different doors' ... And verily, he was full of knowledge, as We had granted it to him.” (12:67-68)

﴿وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ﴾

“And when the disbelievers hear your recitation, they (almost) try to eradicate you with their sights, and they say: 'He is possessed.'” (68:51)

Nothing in these verses suggests that there is something supernatural about the Evil Eye and not just merely envy. Grammatically, this becomes evident by considering the fact that the reference is to the envious person, i.e., الفاعل (al-fa'il) – the agent which in this context is an active participle. The evil of the envious (sharri hasidi) when he envies (hasada). There isn't any reference to anything supernatural or any invisible force.

Likewise, there isn't a reference to an invisible, harmful force in the advice of Ya'qub to his sons.

As for the verse about the disbelievers wishing they could eradicate or harm the Prophet ﷺ with their sight, this most of all shows that it wasn't possible, even if one should take the verse literally. In that case, the verse actually serves as an indication disproving the supernatural effect of the Evil Eye.

عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ بْنِ سَهْلٍ بْنِ حُنَيْفٍ، قَالَ مَرَّ عَامِرُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ بِسَهْلٍ بْنِ حُنَيْفٍ وَهُوَ يَغْتَسِلُ فَقَالَ لَمْ أَرَ كَالْيَوْمِ وَلَا جِلْدَ مُحَبَّبٍ فَمَا لَبِثَ أَنْ لُبِطَ بِهِ فَأَتَى بِهِ النَّبِيَّ فَقِيلَ لَهُ أَذْرَكَ سَهْلًا صَرِيحًا قَالَ مَنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ بِهِ قَالُوا عَامِرُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ قَالَ عَلَامَ يَقْتُلُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَخَاهُ إِذَا رَأَى أَحَدُكُمْ مِنْ أَخِيهِ مَا يُعْجِبُهُ فَلْيَدْعُ لَهُ بِالْبَرَكَاتِ ثُمَّ دَعَا بِمَاءٍ فَأَمَرَ عَامِرًا أَنْ يَتَوَضَّأَ فَيَغْسِلَ وَجْهَهُ وَيَدَيْهِ إِلَى الْمِرْفَقَيْنِ وَرُكْبَتَيْهِ وَدَاخِلَةَ إِزَارِهِ وَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَصُبَّ عَلَيْهِ قَالَ سَفِيَانُ قَالَ مَعَمَّرٌ عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ وَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَكْفَأَ الْإِنَاءَ مِنْ خَلْفِهِ

“It was narrated that Abu Umamah Bin Sahl Bin Hunayf said: ‘Amir bin Rabi’ah passed by Sahl bin Hunaif when he was having a bath and said: ‘I have never seen such beautiful skin.’ Sahl fell to the ground. He was brought to the Prophet, and it was said: ‘Sahl has had a fit.’ He said: ‘Whom do you accuse with regard to him?’ They said: “Amir bin Rabi’ah.’ He said: ‘Why would anyone of you kill his brother? If he sees something that he likes, then let him pray for blessing for him.’ Then he called for water, and he told ‘Amir to perform ablution, then he washed his face and his arms up to the elbows, his knees and inside his lower garment, then he told him to pour the water over him.” (Ibn Majah)

عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ بْنِ سَهْلٍ بْنِ حُنَيْفٍ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ أَبَاهُ، يَقُولُ اغْتَسَلَ أَبِي سَهْلٍ بْنُ حُنَيْفٍ بِالْخَرَّارِ فَتَرَعَ جُبَّةً كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ وَعَامِرُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ يَنْظُرُ قَالَ وَكَانَ سَهْلٌ رَجُلًا أَيْضًا حَسَنَ الْجِلْدِ - قَالَ - فَقَالَ لَهُ عَامِرُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ مَا رَأَيْتُ كَالْيَوْمِ وَلَا جِلْدَ عَذْرَاءَ قَالَ فَوَعَكَ سَهْلٌ مَكَانَهُ وَاشْتَدَّ وَعْكَهُ فَأَتَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَخْبَرَ أَنَّ سَهْلًا وَعَكَ وَأَنَّهُ غَيْرُ رَائِحٍ مَعَكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ فَأَتَاهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَخْبَرَهُ سَهْلٌ بِالَّذِي كَانَ مِنْ شَأْنِ عَامِرٍ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَلَامَ يَقْتُلُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَخَاهُ إِلَّا بَرَكْتَ إِنَّ الْعَيْنَ حَقٌّ تَوَضَّأَ لَهُ فَتَوَضَّأَ لَهُ عَامِرٌ فَرَأَى سَهْلٌ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَيْسَ بِهِ بَأْسٌ

“Muhammad ibn Abi Umama ibn Sahl ibn Hunayf heard his father say: ‘My father, Sahl ibn Hunayf did a ghusl at al-Kharrar. He removed the jubbah he had on while Amir ibn Rabia was watching, and Sahl was a man with beautiful white skin. Amir said to him: ‘I have never seen anything like what I have seen today, not even the skin of a virgin.’ Sahl had fallen where he was standing, and his condition grew worse. Somebody went to the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and told him that Sahl was ill, and could not go with him. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, came to him, and Sahl told him what had happened with Amir. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, ‘Why does one of you wish to kill his brother? Why did you not say: ‘May Allah bless you?’ (tabaraka-llah) The evil eye is true. Do wudu from it.’ Amir did wudu from it, and Sahl went with the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and there was nothing wrong with him.” (Muwatta)

عَنْ أَبِي أُمَامَةَ بْنِ سَهْلٍ بْنِ حُنَيْفٍ، أَنَّهُ قَالَ رَأَى عَامِرُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ سَهْلَ بْنَ حُنَيْفٍ يَغْتَسِلُ فَقَالَ مَا رَأَيْتُ كَالْيَوْمِ وَلَا جِلْدَ مُخْبِئَةٍ فَلَبِطَ سَهْلٌ فَأَتَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَلْ لَكَ فِي سَهْلِ بْنِ حُنَيْفٍ وَاللَّهِ مَا يَرْفَعُ رَأْسَهُ فَقَالَ هَلْ تَتَّهِمُونَ لَهُ أَحَدًا قَالُوا نَتَّهِمُ عَامِرَ بْنَ رَبِيعَةَ قَالَ فَدَعَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَامِرًا فَتَغَيَّطَ عَلَيْهِ وَقَالَ عَلَامَ يَقْتُلُ أَحَدُكُمْ أَخَاهُ إِلَّا بَرَكْتَ اغْتَسَلَ لَهُ فَعَسَلَ عَامِرٌ وَجْهَهُ وَيَدَيْهِ وَمِرْقَتَيْهِ وَأَطْرَافَ رِجْلَيْهِ وَدَاخِلَةَ إِزَارِهِ فِي قَدَحٍ ثُمَّ صَبَّ عَلَيْهِ فَرَأَى سَهْلٌ مَعَ النَّاسِ لَيْسَ بِهِ بَأْسٌ

“Malik related that Abu Umama ibn Sahl ibn Hunayf said: ‘Amir ibn Rabia saw Sahl ibn Hunayf taking a bath and said: ‘I have not seen the like of what I see today, not even the skin of a maiden who has never been out of doors.’ Sahl fell to the ground. The Messenger of Allah was approached, and it was said: ‘Messenger of Allah, can you do anything

about Sahl ibn Hunayf? By Allah, he can not raise his head.' He asked: 'Do you suspect anyone of it?' They said: 'We suspect 'Amir ibn Rabia.' He continued: The Messenger of Allah summoned 'Amir and was furious with him and said: 'Why does one of you kill his brother? Why did you not say: 'May Allah bless you? Do ghusl for it.' 'Amir washed his face, hands, elbows, knees, the end of his feet, and inside his lower garment in a vessel. Then he poured it over him, and Sahl went off with the people, and there was nothing wrong with him.' (Muwatta)

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَامِرٍ قَالَ انْطَلَقَ عَامِرُ بْنُ رَبِيعَةَ وَسَهْلُ بْنُ حَنْظَلٍ يُرِيدَانِ الْغُسْلَ قَالَ فَاَنْطَلَقَا يَلْتَمِسَانِ الْخَمْرَ قَالَ فَوَضَعَ عَامِرٌ جُبَّةً كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ صُوفٍ فَتَنَظَّرْتُ إِلَيْهِ فَأَصْبَتْهُ بِعَيْنِي فَتَزَلَّ الْمَاءُ يَغْتَسِلُ قَالَ فَسَمِعْتُ لَهُ فِي الْمَاءِ قَرْقَعَةً فَأَتَيْتُهُ فَنَادَيْتُهُ ثَلَاثًا فَلَمْ يُجِبْنِي فَأَتَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَخْبَرْتُهُ قَالَ فَجَاءَ يَمْشِي فَخَاصَ الْمَاءَ كَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَى بَيَاضِ سَاقَيْهِ قَالَ فَضَرَبَ صَدْرَهُ بِيَدِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ اللَّهُمَّ أَذْهَبْ عَنْهُ حَرَّهَا وَبَرِّدْهَا وَوَصِّبْهَا قَالَ فَقَامَ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا رَأَى أَحَدُكُمْ مِنْ أَخِيهِ أَوْ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ أَوْ مِنْ مَالِهِ مَا يَعْجَبُهُ فَلْيَبْرِكْهُ فَإِنَّ الْعَيْنَ حَقٌّ

“Abdullah Ibn 'Amir narrated: 'Amir Ibn Rabi'ah and Sahl Ibn Hunaif went to take a bath. Both of them were covered. 'Amir took the wool robe that Sahl had worn to cover himself. 'Amir said, 'I looked at him, and my sight fell on him while he was bathing. Then I heard a loud splash in the water from where he was standing, and I called him three times, but he didn't reply. I went to the Prophet and informed him. The Prophet walked out into the water, and when he reached Sahl, he hit him in the chest and said: 'O Allah, remove its heat, its cold, and its pain.' Then the Prophet stood up and said: 'If one of you sees something in your brother or his property which make you envious, then ask for him to be blessed. Verily, the Evil Eye is true.'” (Musnad Ahmad & al-Hakim)

The Muslims who employ this narration as evidence for the existence of the Evil Eye and its supernatural effect, they undertake much guesswork, and they interpret the narration in light of superstition, i.e., they push unprovable ideas onto the narration and interpret it in light of these superstitious ideas, and then they confirm superstition. Thus, it's a circular argumentation and a grave intellectual error, and therefore invalid.

The course of action in the narration is that 'Amir sees Sahl bathing. Afterward, it becomes clear that Sahl has fallen. The Prophet ﷺ is informed, and he asks whom they suspect. They reply that they suspect 'Amir, because 'Amir was looking at Sahl. Then the Prophet ﷺ criticizes envy and exhorts his companions that instead of becoming envious one ought to seek blessings for the person one is jealous of due to whatever this person has received from Allah ﷻ.

There is nothing in the narration which confirms or ratifies that something supernatural has occurred. Sahl is found lying down, and they are asked whom they suspect has done something (physically) to Sahl. They reply that they suspect 'Amir, as he was seen looking at him. I.e., they suspected him of hitting, kicking, or doing something else to knock him down. However, since there wasn't any evidence, the Prophet ﷺ chose to treat the topic of envy, and that one shouldn't act when feeling envious. This is why there is a reference to the Evil Eye.

It's not justified to push superstition onto the narrations and course of action in the manner it's done by those who try to prove the existence of the Evil Eye through such misinterpretations of the texts.

Compare this event with the one we've mentioned earlier:

حدثني إسحق بن منصور أخبرنا بشر بن عمر قال سمعت مالك بن أنس يقول حدثني أبو ليلى عبد الله بن عبد الرحمن بن سهل عن سهل بن أبي حثمة أنه أخبره عن رجال من كبراء قومه أن عبد الله بن سهل ومحبيصة خرجا إلى خيبر من جهد أصابهم فأتى محبيصة فأخبر أن عبد الله بن سهل قد قتل وطرح في عين أو فقير فأتى يهود فقال أنتم والله قتلتموه قالوا والله ما قتلناه ثم أقبل حتى قدم على قومه فذكر لهم ذلك ثم أقبل هو وأخوه حويصة وهو أكبر منه وعبد الرحمن بن سهل فذهب محبيصة ليتكلم وهو الذي كان بخيبر فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لمحبيصة كبر كبير يريد السن فتكلم حويصة ثم تكلم محبيصة فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إنا أن يدوا صاحبكم وإما أن يؤذونا بحرب فكتب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إليهم في ذلك فكتبوا إنا والله ما قتلناه فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لحويصة ومحبيصة وعبد الرحمن أتخلفون وتستحقون دم صاحبكم قالوا لا قال فتخلف لكم يهود قالوا ليسوا بمسلمين فواداه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من عنده فبعث إليهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مائة ناقة حتى أدخلت عليهم الدار فقال سهل فلقد ركضتني منها ناقة حمراء

“Abu Laila ‘Abdullah Bin ‘Abd ar-Rahman Bin Sahl reported that the elderly persons of (the tribe) had informed Sahl Bin Abu Hathmah that ‘Abdullah Bin Sahl and Muhayyisah went out to Khaibar under some distress which had afflicted them. Muhayyisah came and informed that ‘Abdullah Bin Sahl had been killed, and (his dead body) had been thrown in a well or a ditch. He came to the Jews and said: ‘By Allah, it is you who have killed him. They said: ‘By Allah, we have not killed him.’ He then came to his people and made mention of that to them. Then came he and his brother Huwayyisah, and he was older than he, and ‘Abd ar-Rahman Bin Sahl. Then Muhayyisah went to speak, and it was he who had accompanied ‘Abdullah to Khaibar, whereupon the Messenger of Allah said to Muhayyisah: ‘Observe greatness of the great (he meant the seniority of age).’ Then Huwayyisah spoke, and then Muhayyisah also spoke. Thereupon the Messenger of Allah said: ‘They should either pay blood-wit for your companion or be prepared for war.’ The Messenger of Allah wrote about it to them (to the Jews). They wrote back: ‘Verily, by Allah, we have not killed him.’ Thereupon the Messenger of Allah said to Huwayyisah, Muhayyisah, and Abd ar-Rahman: ‘Are you prepared to take oath in order to entitle yourselves for the blood-wit of your companion?’ They said: ‘No.’ He (the Holy Prophet) said: ‘Then the Jews will take the oath (of their innocence).’ They said: ‘They are not Muslims.’ The Messenger of Allah, however, himself paid the blood-wit to them and sent them one hundred camels until they entered into their houses, Sahl said: ‘One red she-camel among them kicked me.’” (Muslim)

In the case of ‘Abdullah Bin Sahl, nobody even thought about the Evil Eye; every explanation was limited to natural explanations; it must have been the Jews who killed him, but since it couldn’t be proven, then it wasn’t possible to demand bloodwit for the murder of ‘Abdullah Bin Sahl. However, when Sahl is found lying down, then one should jump to the conclusion that some imaginary, invisible force from the very soul; the non-existing Evil Eye knocked him down? The contradiction should be evident in such an interpretation of the event concerning Sahl, which is why only a natural explanation like the one we’ve mentioned is valid.

In neither of the cases, did they know who had killed ‘Abdullah and who had knocked over Sahl, so in neither of the cases, it was possible

to punish someone. However, in both cases, the Prophet ﷺ chose the best course of action. In the case of 'Abdullah the solution was the payment of bloodwit, whereas, in the case of Sahl, the solution was to address the issue of envy – the Evil Eye which entails that one sees something that makes one envious followed by one attempts to harm the person or the thing that caused jealousy.

There are several narrations which likewise are, wrongfully, interpreted in light of superstition to confirm superstition:

عَنْ عُبَيْدِ بْنِ رِفَاعَةَ الزُّرَقِيِّ، قَالَ قَالَتْ أَسْمَاءُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ بَنِي جَعْفَرٍ تُصِيبُهُمُ الْعَيْنُ فَأَسْتَرْقِي لَهُمْ قَالَ نَعَمْ فَلَوْ كَانَ شَيْءٌ سَابِقَ الْقَدَرِ سَبَقَتْهُ الْعَيْنُ

“Ubaid Bin Rifa’ah az-Zuraqi narrated that Asma’ said: “Asma’ said: ‘O Messenger of Allah! The children of Ja’far are troubled by the evil eye, shall I seek treatment for them?’ He said: ‘Yes, for if anything were to overtake the Divine decree it would be the evil eye.’” (Ibn Majah)

عَنْ عُبَيْدِ بْنِ رِفَاعَةَ الزُّرَقِيِّ، أَنَّ أَسْمَاءَ بِنْتَ عُمَيْسٍ، قَالَتْ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ وَلَدَ جَعْفَرٍ تُسْرِعُ إِلَيْهِمُ الْعَيْنُ أَفَأَسْتَرْقِي لَهُمْ فَقَالَ نَعَمْ فَإِنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ شَيْءٌ سَابِقَ الْقَدَرِ لَسَبَقَتْهُ الْعَيْنُ قَالَ أَبُو عِيْسَى وَفِي الْبَابِ عَنْ عِمْرَانَ بْنِ حُصَيْنٍ وَبُرَيْدَةَ وَهَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ صَحِيحٌ

“Ubaid Bin Rifa’ah az-Zuraqi narrated that Asma' bint 'Umaish said: ‘O Messenger of Allah (S.A.W)! The children of Ja’far are quick to become troubled by the Evil Eye, so should I have them treated?’ He replied: ‘Yes, for indeed if there were anything that could overcome the Decree, then the Evil Eye would overcome it.’” (at-Tirmidhi)

عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ يَسَارٍ، أَنَّ عُرْوَةَ بْنَ الزُّبَيْرِ، حَدَّثَهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ دَخَلَ بَيْتَ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ زَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَفِي الْبَيْتِ صَبِيٌّ يَبْكِي فَذَكَرُوا لَهُ أَنَّ بِهِ الْعَيْنَ - قَالَ عُرْوَةُ - فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَلَا تَسْتَرْقُونَ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَيْنِ

“Sulayman Ibn Yasar narrated that ‘Urwah Ibn az-Zubayr told him that the Messenger of Allah entered the house of Umm Salamah, the wife of the Prophet. A child was weeping in the house, and they told him that it was due to the Evil Eye. ‘Urwah said: The Messenger of Allah asked: ‘Don’t you seek to treat the Evil Eye?’” (Muwatta)

حَدَّثَنِي عَنْ مَالِكٍ، عَنْ حُمَيْدِ بْنِ قَيْسٍ الْمَكِّيِّ، أَنَّهُ قَالَ دُخِلَ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِابْنَيْ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ فَقَالَ لِحَاضِنَتَيْهِمَا مَا لِي أَرَاهُمَا ضَارِعَيْنِ فَقَالَتْ حَاضِنَتُهُمَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ تَسْرُعُ إِلَيْهِمَا الْعَيْنُ وَلَمْ يَمْنَعْنَا أَنْ نَسْتَرْقِي لَهُمَا إِلَّا أَنَّا لَا نَدْرِي مَا يُوَفِّقُكَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اسْتَرْقُوا لَهُمَا فَإِنَّهُ لَوْ سَبَقَ شَيْءٌ الْقَدَرَ لَسَبَقْتَهُ الْعَيْنُ

“Humayd Ibn Qays al-Makki said: A man came to the Messenger of Allah with the two sons of Jafar Ibn Abi Talib. He said to their nursemaid: ‘Why are they so similar to each other?’ Their nursemaid said: ‘O Messenger of Allah, the Evil Eye goes quickly to them. Nothing stops us from asking someone to treat them, except that we do not know what of that would agree with you.’ The Messenger of Allah said: ‘Have them treated. Had anything been able to precede the decree, the Evil Eye would precede it.’” (Muwatta)

Nothing suggests that the reference to the Evil Eye in these narrations is a reference to something supernatural; the narrations are about children who fight, argue, and imitate each other in their mutual rivalry due to envy.

The following narrations are weak and might have contributed to the misunderstanding:

أَخْبَرَنَا هِلَالُ بْنُ الْعَلَاءِ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سَعِيدُ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبَّادُ، عَنِ الْجُرَيْرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي نَضْرَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَعَوَّذُ مِنْ عَيْنِ الْجَانِّ وَعَيْنِ الْإِنْسِ فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتِ الْمُعَوِّذَتَانِ أَخَذَ بِهِمَا وَتَرَكَ مَا سِوَى ذَلِكَ

“Abu Sa’id narrated that the Messenger of Allah used to seek refuge from the Evil Eye of the Jinn and the evil eye of humans. When al-Mu’awwadhatan (al-Falaq and an-Nas) were revealed, he started to recite them and stopped reciting anything else.” (an-Nasa’i & Ibn Majah)

Chain of narration: Hilal Bin al-'Ala' Bin Hilal Bin 'Umar - Sa'id Bin Sulaiman al-Dabi - 'Aabad Bin al-Wam Bin - Sa'id Bin Iyas al-Jurairi - al-Mandhar Bin Malik Bin Qata' - Abu Sa'id al-Khudri

Sa'id Bin Iyas was declared weak by some scholars, and other scholars rejected his narrations because his memory deteriorated before his death according to *Miṣṣan* by adh-Dhahabi, vol 2; *Tarikh ul-Kabir* by al-Bukhari, vol 3; *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd*, vol 7; *Syar A'lam* by adh-Dhahabi, vol 6, Tahdheeb by Ibn Hajar, vol 4.

This might explain why the only narration with this wording has a chain of narration which includes him.

There is another variant of this narration:

حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ يُنُسَ الْكُوفِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا الْقَاسِمُ بْنُ مَالِكِ الْمَزْنِيُّ، عَنِ الْجُرَيْرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي نَضْرَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ، قَالَ كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَتَعَوَّذُ مِنَ الْجَانِّ وَالْإِنْسَانِ حَتَّى نَزَلَتِ الْمُعَوِّذَتَانِ فَلَمَّا نَزَلَتَا أَخَذَ بِهِمَا وَتَرَكَ مَا سِوَاهُمَا قَالَ أَبُو عِيسَى وَفِي الْبَابِ عَنْ أَنَسٍ وَهَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ غَرِيبٌ

“Abu Sa'id narrated that the Messenger of Allah would seek refuge from the Jinn and the Evil Eye of humans until al-Mu'awwidhatain were revealed. When they were revealed, he used them and left other than them.” (at-Tirmidhi)

Chain of narration: Hisham Bin Yunus – al-Muzani – al-Jurairi – Abu Nadrah – Abu Sa'id al-Khudri.

The narration with this wording can also be traced back to al-Jurairi and should likewise be rejected.

عن أنس أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: من رأى شيئا فاعجبه قال: ما شاء الله لا قوة إلا بالله لم يضره

“Anas Ibn Malik narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Whosoever sees something he likes and says *Masha Allah, la quwwatah illa billah* shall not be harmed.” (Majma' az-Zawa'id)

Al-Haithami wrote the about this narration in *Majma' az-Zawa'id*, vol 5:

رواه البزار من رواية أبي بكر الهذلي وأبو بكر ضعيف جدا

“Narrated by al-Bazzar from Abu Bakr al-Hadhali, and Abu Bakr is very weak.”

Therefore, it's self-evident that this narration should be rejected.

In another narration, we're informed that the majority of the Muslims shall die due to the Evil Eye:

أَكْثَرُ مَنْ يَمُوتُ مِنْ أُمَّتِي بَعْدَ قَضَاءِ اللَّهِ وَقَدَرِهِ بِالْعَيْنِ

"The majority amongst my nation who dies will second to the Decree of Allah be due to the Evil Eye." (al-Bazzar, al-Hakim & at-Tirmidhi)

Nothing in the narration suggests that this is related to something supernatural. Allah ﷻ informed us how some of the first people killed each other due to envy, for instance when Qabeel killed Habel:

﴿وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتَقَبَّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ لَئِن بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدِيَ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَنَّكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ نَبُوءَ بِآثِمِي وَإِنَّمَا فَتَكُونُ مِنَ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ ﴿٢٩﴾ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾ فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾

"Tell them the true story of the two sons of Adam (Habeel and Qabeel). Each one of them offered a sacrifice. God accepted the sacrifice of one of them (Habeel) but not that of the other (Qabeel) who then said to his brother: 'I shall certainly kill you.' (Habeel) Replied: 'Allah only accepts the offerings of the pious ones. Even if you try to kill me, I certainly shall not try to kill you. I fear Allah, the Lord of the creation. I would prefer you to take sole responsibility for both our sins and thus become a dweller of hell; this is what an unjust person deserves.' (Qabeel's) Soul prompted him to kill his own brother. In doing so, he became of the losers." (5:27-30)

It was narrated that once the Prophet ﷺ was ill, and Jibril prayed for him:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ، أَنَّ جِبْرِيلَ، أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ اسْتَكَثَّ فَقَالَ نَعَمْ قَالَ بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ أَرْفِيكَ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ يُؤْذِيكَ مِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ أَوْ عَيْنٍ حَاسِدٍ اللَّهُ يَشْفِيكَ بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ أَرْفِيكَ

“Abu Sa’id narrated that Jibril came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked: ‘O Muhammad, have you fallen ill?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ Jibril said: ‘In the name of Allah, I ask for healing for you from everything, and I seek protection for you from every evil that may harm you and from the eye of an envious one. May Allah cure you, and I invoke the name of Allah for you.’” (Muslim)

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، زَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ كَانَ إِذَا اشْتَكَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَقَاهُ جِبْرِيلُ قَالَ بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ يُبْرِيكَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ دَاءٍ يَشْفِيكَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ وَشَرِّ كُلِّ ذِي عَيْنٍ

“Aisha narrated that When the Messenger of Allah fell ill, Gabriel used to recite this: ‘In the name of Allah, may He cure you from all kinds of illnesses and safeguard you from the evil of a jealous one when he feels jealous and from the evil of anyone with an Evil Eye.’” (Muslim)

Nothing in this event suggests that there is something supernatural with regards to the Evil Eye. Jibril عليه السلام asks for protection on behalf of the Prophet ﷺ from the evil of the envious when he envies, and the thing that leads to evil; envy.

Ruqya

In the past, various peoples chanted different rhymes and incantations to get access to supernatural abilities or to having their granted; some associated this practice to magic, others to the Evil Eye, and yet others to contact with spirits.

This ritual was closely connected with their religions and philosophies which entailed *shirk* and *kufr* for instance in Babylon, by sanctifying planets and ascribing them power over various events, as has been mentioned earlier.

The topic *ruqya* is likewise, by some Muslims, associated with the Evil Eye, Jinn-possession, and magic where the *kufr* and *shirk* from the various earlier religions and civilizations have been peeled off and replaced with Islamic monotheism. Instead of chanting rhymes and incantations to honor planets which, according to them, controlled the course of actions in the world, these Muslims recite Koranic verses to honor Allah ﷻ who organizes the affairs of the world – thus, a mere

substitution of the underlying belief has taken place, while the superstitious rituals are almost unaltered.

Together, we've concluded that neither magic or the Evil Eye has a supernatural effect, and Jinn-possession isn't possible. This doesn't leave much space for the topic *ruqya*.

The narrations about *ruqya* indicate that *ruqya* is merely to pray for protection, healing, and to actively try to treat problematic tendencies, as is evident in the text mentioned earlier:

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ، أَنَّ جِبْرِيلَ، أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ اشْتَكَيتَ فَقَالَ نَعَمْ
قَالَ بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ أَرْقِيكَ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ يُؤْذِيكَ مِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ أَوْ عَيْنٍ حَاسِدٍ اللَّهُ يَشْفِيكَ بِاسْمِ
اللَّهِ أَرْقِيكَ

“Abu Sa’id narrated that Jibril came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked: ‘O Muhammad, have you fallen ill?’ He replied: ‘Yes.’ Jibril said: ‘In the name of Allah, I ask for healing for you from everything, and I seek protection for you from every evil that may harm you and from the eye of an envious one. May Allah cure you, and I invoke the name of Allah for you.’” (Muslim)

If we combine this with the order to seek medical cures against diseases, then it's part of a greater whole; Ask Allah ﷻ for protection, healing, treat the problem, and seek a cure.

We are informed that the Prophet ﷺ would do *ruqya* for himself:

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان إذا اشتكى يقرأ على نفسه
بالمعوذات وينفث فلما اشتد وجعه كنت أقرأ عليه وأمسح بيده رجاء بركته

“Aisha narrated that Whenever Allah's Messenger became sick, he would recite Mu’awwidhat (al-Falaq and Surat an- Nas) and then blow his breath over his body. When he became seriously ill, I used to recite (these two) and rub his hands over his body, hoping for its blessings.” (al-Bukhari)

However, there aren't any narrations about him asking others to perform *ruqya* on his behalf which is the common practice today where

people instead of helping patients with the proper treatment just sit there and blow Koranic verses on them, blow Koranic verses on water and let the patient drink the water or rub the patient in something blown at.

Conclusion

There isn't any authentic, textual evidence for the existence of the supernatural, Evil Eye. There are some authentic texts on envy which have been misunderstood by some Muslims who have interpreted them in light of a superstitious idea and thus found confirmation of the superstition in the texts, however, this is a circular and incorrect argumentation along with its conclusion.

This misunderstanding has influenced the understanding of *ruqya*, and once this misunderstanding is clarified, then the idea of *ruqya* becomes drained of superstition. *Ruqya* is actually merely an extension of asking Allah ﷻ of something and should in the context of diseases be combined with treating the disease with medicine.

Working wonders (Karamah)

Karamah is a term describing a miraculous event caused by a pious person, an ally or close friend of Allah, a *wali ullah*, who works wonders due to the Mercy and Grace of Allah ﷻ as a reward for having a close relationship with Him. It's similar to the idea in Catholicism with Saints, allegedly, working wonders.

Various scholars explain that one of the most apparent differences between miracles and *karamah* is that a Prophet or a Messenger perform a miracle as a response on a request by people demanding evidence for the claim of Prophethood. Afterward, they are challenged to match it. Whereas, *Karamah* is granted to a person without any request. I.e., a miracle is given to a Prophet or a Messenger for him to prove his truthfulness about his claim of Prophethood, typically in public, whereas *karamah* is given to one of the friends of Allah without any demands being made, typically not in public. Allah ﷻ is the source to both miracles and *karamah*, which is why neither of them can be said to be impossible for Him ﷻ.

Examples of karamah

There are many examples in the Qur'an of people before the Prophet ﷺ receiving *karamah*. Allah ﷻ said:

﴿لَمَّا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ﴾

“Whenever Zakariya entered the sanctuary to (see) her, he found with her food. He said: O Mariam! Whence comes this to you? She said: It is from Allah. Surely Allah gives to whom He pleases without measure.” (3:37)

Various interpreters of the Qur'an explained that Maryam was provided with fruits outside their season. I.e., in the summer she was provided with fruits of the winter, and in winter she was supplied with fruits of the summer which is impossible under normal circumstances.

However, as Maryam wasn't a Prophet or a Messenger, this temporal cancellation of the laws of nature is termed *karamah*.

Another example is the People of the Cave (ashab al-kahf) about whom Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا﴾

"They stayed in the cave for 300 years with the addition of nine."
(18:25)

I.e., the People of the cave received a temporal cancellation of the laws of nature in the guise of sleeping for 309 years without aging. Moreover, as they weren't Prophets or Messengers, this is termed *karamah*.

Another example is when Sulayman ﷻ wanted the throne of the Queen of Sa'bah. Allah ﷻ described the event:

﴿قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَن يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَٰذَا مِن فَضْلِي رَبِّي لِيُبْلُوَنِي أَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ ۚ وَمَن شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۚ وَمَن كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ﴾

"One who had the knowledge of the Book said: I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye. Then when he saw it settled beside him, he said: This is of the grace of my Lord that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful; and whoever is grateful, he is grateful only for his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely my Lord is Self-sufficient, Honored." (27:40)

The idea is that the People of the Cave, the one with knowledge of the Book, and Maryam weren't Prophets or Messengers, but the Qur'an confirms that they experienced a cancellation of the laws of nature which usually would be termed miracles. However, since miracles are associated with Prophets and Messengers proving their claims of Prophethood and their receiving Revelation from Allah ﷻ, then these cancellations are termed *karamaat*.

In reality, there is nothing odious in acknowledging that if it's possible for Allah ﷻ to cancel the laws of nature for Prophets and Messengers, then it's also entirely possible for Him ﷻ to cancel them for others if

He ﷻ wishes. The proponents for the idea that laws of nature are canceled even today employ precisely this line of thought. Allah ﷻ determined the laws of nature, and He ﷻ can do whatever He ﷻ wishes – including canceling the laws of nature for whomsoever He ﷻ pleases.

The relevant part of claims of cancellations of the laws of nature, for instance, if X should claim that he flew yesterday at 8 PM without the use of aids, isn't whether or not Allah ﷻ has the ability to make it occur, the relevant part is whether or not Allah ﷻ made it happen or not. i.e., did Allah ﷻ cancel the laws of nature for X yesterday at 8 PM and allow X to fly or not.

One should distinguish between what Allah ﷻ was able to do and what Allah ﷻ actually did do. If the mere possibility to do something meant that one had done it, then we all would be guilty until proven innocent in the cases of various offenses due to the ability to commit them until proven innocent. I.e., all of us have the ability to commit offenses. However, this does not mean that we've all committed them. I have the ability to steal my neighbor's TV, but this doesn't mean that I've actually done so. Likewise, I have the ability to eat infants, but this does not mean that I've actually done so. In the same manner, Allah ﷻ has the ability to cancel the laws of nature, but it doesn't mean that He ﷻ actually has done so at a given time.

To understand the topic in depth, it's necessary to draw a timeline illustrating when mankind received the last Revelation through the Prophet ﷺ.

The history of the world can thus be divided into three categories:

- 1) The era of Revelation with Prophets and Messengers and various cancellations of the laws of nature which can be confirmed through Revelation.
- 2) The era after the Revelation with no Prophets and Messengers, which makes it impossible to confirm through Revelation that a cancellation of the laws of nature has occurred.

- 3) The brief period in which the Revelation of the last Prophet can address a particular person and confirm that this person has received a unique ability permitting the person to experience a cancellation of laws of nature.

The era of Revelation

The time between Adam ﷺ and the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ belongs to the era of Revelation, in which the occurrence of cancellations of laws of nature might be necessary in the case of a Prophet or a Messenger. In this era, the Revelation confirms whether or not a particular person received *karamah*. I.e., a person who isn't a Prophet nor a Messenger might have received one or multiple cancellations of the laws of nature, and the Revelation can narrate this to us, enabling us to accept that it happened just like the before mentioned examples from the Qur'an.

After the era of Revelation

Then there is the period after the death of the Prophet ﷺ until the Day of Judgement. Nothing is Revealed in this period, as the Qur'an is the final Revelation to mankind until the Day of Judgement. This makes it impossible to confirm specific experiences of cancellations of laws of nature. I.e., if someone was to claim that he experienced one or multiple cancellations of the laws of nature, then it can't be confirmed by Revelation.

The intermediate period

This is the brief period in which the Revelation of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ can confirm a particular person experiencing particular cancellations of the laws of nature. For instance, if the Prophet ﷺ informed us through narration or Allah ﷻ informed us in a Koranic verse that X has the ability to fly, then the Revelation would've confirmed this ability. If, however, the text informed us that X flew in a particular situation, then the Revelation would've established the specific person's specific ability in a specific situation and not in other situations.

If there is a narration in which the Prophet ﷺ says that a specific person flew in a specific situation, then it would be necessary to examine the authenticity of the text, i.e., to what extent is it possible to confirm that this statement actually is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ. Since it's an incredible claim, the authenticity of the text is required to be reliable, as incredible claims require strong evidence. Besides that, numerous Koranic verses establish the fact that the universe operates with invariable laws of nature, which necessitates confirmation by Revelation before one can accept such information through narrations. Thus, it's not sufficient that a handful of people, or even numerous people, narrate that they've experienced one or multiple cancellations of the laws of nature.

Allah ﷻ said:

﴿وَايَةً لَهُمُ الْأَرْضُ الْمَيْتَةُ أَحْيَيْنَاهَا وَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهَا حَبًّا فَمِنْهُ يَأْكُلُونَ﴾

"And a sign to them is the dead earth: We give life to it and bring forth from it grain, so they eat of it." (36:33)

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنبِثُ الْأَرْضُ وَمِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ ٣٦ ﴿وَايَةً لَهُمُ اللَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ النَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُمْ مُظْلِمُونَ﴾ ٣٧ ﴿وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ﴾ ٣٨ ﴿وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَرْنَا مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ﴾ ٣٩ ﴿لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ﴾

"Glory be to Him Who created pairs of all things, of what the earth grows, and of their kind and of what they do not know. And a sign to them is the night: We draw forth from it the day, then lo! They are in the dark. And the sun runs on to a term appointed for it; that is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing. And (as for) the moon, We have ordained for it stages till it becomes again as an old dry palm branch. Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon nor can the night outstrip the day; and all run in a course." (36:36-40)

﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

“The creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of nights and days, the ships that sail in the sea for the benefit of the people, the water that Allah sends from the sky to revive the dead earth where He has scattered all kinds of animals, the winds of all directions, and the clouds rendered for service between the sky and the earth are all evidence (of His existence) for those who use their reason.” (2:164)

These and numerous other verses presume, i.e., build on, the order in nature in the guise of laws of nature which is why they draw our attention to the laws of nature and to consider the fact who have determined these laws of nature.

Furthermore, we have the cases in which the Prophet ﷺ praises a particular person using general wordings. In those cases, it's a matter of interpretation or misinterpretation of such text as evidence for a specific cancellation of one or multiple laws of nature.

An example of this is, for instance, a narration in which 'Umar Bin al-Khattab رضي الله عنه shouted something which Sariyah and his army, allegedly, heard many miles away:

يا سارية الجبل
“O Sariyah, the mountain!”

It's argued by some that the following narrations:

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو سَلَمَةَ، يَحْيَى بْنُ خَلْفٍ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْأَعْلَى، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ مَكْحُولٍ، عَنْ غُضَيْفِ بْنِ الْحَارِثِ، عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ يَقُولُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَضَعَ الْحَقَّ عَلَى لِسَانِ عُمَرَ يَقُولُ بِهِ

“It was narrated that Abu Dhar said: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: ‘Allah has placed the truth on the tongue of ‘Umar, and he speaks the truth with it.’” (Ibn Majah)

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ يُونُسَ، حَدَّثَنَا زُهَيْرٌ، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ مَكْحُولٍ، عَنْ غُضَيْفِ بْنِ الْحَارِثِ، عَنْ أَبِي ذَرٍّ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَضَعَ الْحَقَّ عَلَى لِسَانِ عُمَرَ يَقُولُ بِهِ

“It was narrated that Abu Dhar said: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: ‘Allah has placed the truth on the tongue of ‘Umar, and he speaks the truth with it.’” (Abu Dawud)

Are proof that the truth was uttered by ‘Umar, and it reached the ones it was about – despite the great distance.

This line of thought is absurd and renders an empty argument. ‘Umar’s relationship to the truth is related to what he uttered in front of someone else – it doesn’t say anything about suddenly it’s possible to hear him ﷺ several miles away, which is mildly speaking a misinterpretation of the narration.

Another example is it was narrated that the Prophet ﷺ prayed for Sa’d Ibn Abi Waqqas ﷺ:

اللهم استجب له إذا دعاك

“O Allah, answer him when he calls upon You.” (al-Hakim)

According to some Muslims, this is an argument for Sa’d ﷺ receiving *karamah*, a cancellation of the laws of nature during the battle of al-Mada’in. In some versions, it was narrated that Sa’d ﷺ along with his army walked on water and crossed the Tigris river. In other versions, it is, however, explained that they found fords allowing the army to cross the river.

The interesting part, however, is the conception that because the Prophet ﷺ prayed for Sa’d ﷺ, asking Allah to answer his prayers, then this would, according to some people, allow Sa’d ﷺ to receive *karamah*, i.e., cancellations of laws of nature. However, nothing suggests that when Allah ﷻ answers one’s prayers, it should entail cancellations of the laws of nature, so this is a fallacy and an unprovable claim.

Furthermore, some people understand the before mentioned prayer by the Prophet ﷺ as every time Sa’d ﷺ asked Allah ﷻ for something, then it was granted in this life. This is an incorrect understanding since a generalizing wording in the Arabic language doesn’t always imply that something occurs every single time. It’s not justified to insist on understanding the before mentioned narration as every time Sa’d asked

for something, he ﷺ received it in this life, as this would be a grave misinterpretation of the narration. Furthermore, there are numerous other texts which can be unproven, if they were to be understood in the same manner for consistency:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ ثَلَاثٌ دَعَوَاتٍ مُسْتَجَابَاتٌ لَا شَكَّ فِيهِنَّ دَعْوَةُ الْوَالِدِ وَدَعْوَةُ الْمُسَافِرِ وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet said: ‘Three supplications are answered, there being no doubt about them; that of a father, that of a traveler and that of one who has been wronged.’” (Abu Dawud)

عَنِ النَّعْمَانِ بْنِ بَشِيرٍ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ { قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ }

“An-Nu'man Ibn Bashir narrated that the Prophet said: ‘Supplication (du'a) is itself the worship.’ (He then recited:) ‘And your Lord said: Call on Me, I will answer you (11:60).’” (Abu Dawud)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أَنَّهُ قَالَ الْحُجَّاجُ وَالْعُمْرَاءُ وَقَدْ دَعَا اللَّهَ إِنْ دَعْوُهُ أُجَابَتْهُمْ وَإِنْ اسْتَعْفَرُوهُ غُفِرَ لَهُمْ

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘The pilgrims performing Hajj and ‘Umrah are a delegation to Allah. If they call upon Him, He will answer them; and if they ask for His forgiveness, He will forgive them.’” (Ibn Majah)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ يُسْتَجَابُ لِأَخِيكُمْ مَا لَمْ يَعْجَلْ يَقُولُ قَدْ دَعَوْتُ فَلَمْ يُسْتَجَبْ لِي

“Abu Hurayra narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘You will be answered as long as you are not impatient and say: ‘I have made a du'a and I have not been answered.’” (Muwatta)

وعنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان يقول: دعوة المرء المسلم لأخيه بظهر الغيب مستجابة، عند رأسه ملك موكل كلما دعا لأخيه بخير قال الملك الموكل به: آمين، ولك بمثل

“Abu Darda narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘The supplication of a Muslim for his (Muslim) brother in his absence will certainly be answered. Every time he makes a supplication for good for

his brother, the angel appointed for this particular task says: 'Ameen! May it be for you, too.'" (Muslim)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ يَنْزِلُ اللَّهُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ حِينَ يَمْضِي ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْأَوَّلِ فَيَقُولُ أَنَا الْمَلِكُ أَنَا الْمَلِكُ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَدْعُونِي فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيَهُ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ فَلَا يَزَالُ كَذَلِكَ حَتَّى يُضِيَءَ الْفَجْرُ

"Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: Allah descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the first part of the night is over and says: 'I am the Lord; I am the Lord: Who is there to supplicate Me so that I answer him? Who is there to beg of Me so that I grant him? Who is there to beg forgiveness from Me, so that I forgive him?' He continues like this till the day breaks." (Muslim)

عَنْ نَافِعٍ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ عُمَرَ، وَهُوَ عَلَى الصَّفَا يَدْعُو يَقُولُ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ قُلْتَ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ وَإِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ وَإِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ كَمَا هَدَيْتَنِي لِلْإِسْلَامِ أَنْ لَا تُنَرِّعَهُ مِنِّي حَتَّى تَتَوَفَّائِي وَأَنَا مُسْلِمٌ

"Nafi' narrated that he heard 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar pray on Safa': 'O Allah, You have said: 'Call on Me - I will answer you' and You do not break Your promise. So, I am asking You, in the same way, that You have guided me to Islam, not to take it away from me, and that You make me die while I am Muslim.' (Muwatta)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْيَوْمُ الْمَوْعُودُ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالْيَوْمُ الْمَشْهُودُ يَوْمُ عَرَفَةَ وَالشَّاهِدُ يَوْمُ الْجُمُعَةِ وَمَا طَلَعَتِ الشَّمْسُ وَلَا غَرَبَتْ عَلَى يَوْمٍ أَفْضَلَ مِنْهُ فِيهِ سَاعَةٌ لَا يُوَافِقُهَا عَبْدٌ مُؤْمِنٌ يَدْعُو اللَّهَ بِخَيْرٍ إِلَّا أَسْتَجَابَ اللَّهُ لَهُ وَلَا يَسْتَعِيدُ مِنْ شَرِّ إِلَّا أَعَادَهُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ

"Abu Hurairah narrated, that the Messenger of Allah said: 'Al-Yawm ul-Maw'ud (the Promised Day) is the Day of Resurrection, and Al-Yawm ul-Mashhud (the Attended Day) is the Day of Arafah, and Ash-Shahid (the witness) is Friday.' He said: 'The sun does not rise nor set, upon a day that is more virtuous than it. In it, there is an hour in which no believing worshipper supplicates to Allah for good, except that Allah answers it for him, and he does not seek Allah's aid for something, except that He aids him in it.'" (at-Tirmidhi)

وَعَنْ بُرَيْدَةَ قَالَ: سَمِعَ النَّبِيَّ رَجُلًا يَقُولُ: اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْأَلُكَ بِاَنِّيْ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّكَ اَنْتَ اَللّٰهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ، اَلَا اَحَدُ الصَّمَدِ، الَّذِي لَمْ يَلِدْ، وَلَمْ يُولَدْ، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا اَحَدٌ فَقَالَ لَقَدْ سَأَلَ اَللّٰهُ بِاسْمِهِ الَّذِي اِذَا سُئِلَ بِهِ اُعْطِيَ، وَاِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ اُجَابَ

“Buraidah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (saw) heard a man say: ‘O Allah, indeed, I ask you by my testifying that You are Allah, there is none worthy of worship except You, the One, As-Samad, the one who does not beget, nor was begotten, and there is none who is like Him He said: So he (saw) said: ‘By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, he has asked Allah by His Greatest Name, the one which if He is called upon by it, He responds, and when He is asked by it, He gives.’” (Abu Dawud, an-Nasa’i, at-Tirmidhi & Ibn Majah)

عَنْ فَضَالَةَ بْنِ عُبَيْدٍ، قَالَ بَيْنَا رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَاعِدًا اِذْ دَخَلَ رَجُلٌ فَصَلَّى فَقَالَ اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَارْحَمْنِيْ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَجَلْتَ اَتَيْهَا الْمُصَلِّي اِذَا صَلَّيْتَ فَقَعَدْتَ فَاَحْمَدِ اللّٰهُ بِمَا هُوَ اَهْلُهُ وَصَلِّ عَلَيَّ ثُمَّ ادْعُهُ قَالَ ثُمَّ صَلِّ رَجُلٌ اٰخَرُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَحَمِدَ اللّٰهُ وَصَلَّى عَلَيَّ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اَتَيْهَا الْمُصَلِّي ادْعُ تُجِبْ قَالَ اَبُو عِيْسَى هَذَا حَدِيْثٌ حَسَنٌ رَوَاهُ حَيْوَةُ بْنُ شُرَيْحٍ عَنْ اَبِي هَانِيٍّ الْخَوْلَانِيِّ وَابُو هَانِيٍّ اسْمُهُ حُمَيْدُ بْنُ هَانِيٍّ وَابُو عَلِيٍّ الْجَنْجَبِيُّ اسْمُهُ عَمْرُو بْنُ مَالِكٍ

“Fadalah Bin 'Ubaid narrated: “While the Messenger of Allah was seated, a man entered and performed the prayer, and he said: ‘O Allah, forgive me, and have mercy upon me.’ The Messenger of Allah said: ‘You have rushed, O praying person. When you perform prayer and then sit, then praise Allah with what He is deserving of, and send Salat upon me, then call upon Him.’” He said: “Then another man performed Salat after that, so he praised Allah and sent Salat upon the Prophet. The Prophet said to him: ‘O praying person! Supplicate, and you shall be answered.’” (at-Tirmidhi)

عَنْ اَنَسٍ، اَنَّهُ كَانَ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ جَالِسًا وَرَجُلٌ يُصَلِّي ثُمَّ دَعَا اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْأَلُكَ بِاَنَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدَ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ الْمَنَّانُ بَدِيعِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْاَرْضِ يَا ذَا الْجَلَالِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَقَدْ دَعَا اللّٰهُ بِاسْمِهِ الْعَظِيْمِ الَّذِي اِذَا دُعِيَ بِهِ اُجَابَ وَاِذَا سُئِلَ بِهِ اُعْطِيَ

“Anas Ibn Malik narrated: I was sitting with the Messenger of Allah, and a man was offering prayer. He then made supplication: ‘O Allah, I

ask Thee by virtue of the fact that praise is due to Thee, there is no deity but Thou, Who showest favor and beneficence, the Originator of the Heavens and the earth, O Lord of Majesty and Splendour, O Living One, O Eternal One.' The Prophet then said: 'He has supplicated Allah using His Greatest Name when supplicated by this name, He answers, and when asked by this name He gives.'" (Abu Dawud)

عَنْ عُبَادَةَ بْنِ الصَّامِتِ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ تَعَارَّ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَقَالَ جِئَنِّي يَسْتَقِطُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ثُمَّ دَعَا رَبَّ اغْفِرْ لِي قَالَ الْوَلِيدُ أَوْ قَالَ دَعَا اسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ فَإِنْ قَامَ فَتَوَضَّأَ ثُمَّ صَلَّى قُبِلَتْ صَلَاتُهُ

"Ubadah Bin as-Samit narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'If anyone is alarmed while asleep and he says when awakes: 'There is no god but Allah alone Who has no partner, to whom dominion belongs, to whom praise is due, and who has power over everything (omnipotent). Glory be to Allah, and praise be to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and then he prays: O my Lord, forgive me.' Abu Dawud said: Al-Walid's version has: '... and he prays, his prayer will be answered. If he gets up, performs ablution, and prays, his prayer will be accepted.'" (Abu Dawud)

Nobody can justify the claim that all the categories mentioned above have all their prayers answered in this world; no matter what they ask for, it shall be fulfilled.

Furthermore, it's interesting that all the Prophets were given just one prayer each which was guaranteed to be fulfilled, whereas Sa'd ؓ apparently, according to these Muslims, was guaranteed unlimited prayers:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ دَعْوَةٌ مُسْتَجَابَةٌ فَتَعَجَّلَ كُلُّ نَبِيٍّ دَعْوَتَهُ وَإِنِّي اخْتَبَأْتُ دَعْوَتِي شَفَاعَةً لَأُمَّتِي فَهِيَ نَائِلَةٌ مَنْ مَاتَ مِنْهُمْ لَا يُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا "Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: 'Every Prophet had a prayer that was answered, and every Prophet offered this prayer in this world. However, I am saving my prayer so that I can intercede for my nation, and it reaches every one of them who dies not associating anything with Allah.'" (Ibn Majah)

To understand this correctly, what it means to have a prayer answered, one could take the following narration into account:

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن النبي قال: ما من مسلم يدعو بدعاء إلا استجاب له، فإما أن يجعل في الدنيا وإما أن يدخر له في الآخرة، وإما أن يكفر عنه ذنوبه بقدر ما دعا ما لم يدع بإثم أو قطيعة رحم

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: ‘A Muslim does not pray for something, except his prayer is answered. Either it is fulfilled in this world, stored for him in the Hereafter, or some of his bad deeds are atoned for, as long as the prayer does not involve sin or breaking family ties.’” (Ahmad)

This is also confirmed in the following narration about Zayd Ibn Aslam:

وَحَدَّثَنِي عَنْ مَالِكٍ، عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ أَسْلَمَ، أَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ مَا مِنْ دَاعٍ يَدْعُو إِلَّا كَانَ بَيْنَ إِحْدَى ثَلَاثٍ إِمَّا أَنْ يُسْتَجَابَ لَهُ وَإِمَّا أَنْ يُدْخَرَ لَهُ وَإِمَّا أَنْ يُكَفَّرَ عَنْهُ

“Malik narrated that Zayd Ibn Aslam used to say: ‘No-one makes a du’a without one of three things happening. Either it is answered, or it is stored up for him, or wrong actions are atoned for by it.’” (Muwatta)

Summary:

- 1) The narrations about the Prophet ﷺ praying for Sa’d’s prayers to be answered do not imply that Sa’d ﷺ should experience a cancellation of the laws of nature. Nothing suggests it.
- 2) Narrations explain the event with Sa’d ﷺ and his army crossing the river through completely natural explanations; by finding fords which should be sufficient to make people refrain from describing the event as a miracle or *karamah*.

There is a story about a talking wolf and a talking cow that is also mentioned as an argument for the notion of *karamah*. We’ll look into this briefly.

Ibn Kathir collected the narrations about the talking wolf in his work *al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah*:

حدثنا يزيد ، ثنا القاسم بن الفضل الحداني ، عن أبي نضرة ، عن أبي سعيد الخدري قال: عدا الذئب على شاة فأخذها ، فطلبه الراعي ، فانترعها منه ، فألقى الذئب على ذنبه فقال: ألا تتقي الله؟ تنزع مني رزقا ساقه الله إلي؟ فقال: يا عجبا! ذئب مقع على ذنبه يكلمني كلام الإنس؟ فقال الذئب: ألا أخبرك بأعجب من ذلك؟ محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم يثرب يخبر الناس بأنباء ما قد سبق قال: فأقبل الراعي يسوق غنمه حتى دخل المدينة ، فزواها إلى زاوية من زواياها ، ثم أتى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ، فأخبره ، فأمر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فنودي : الصلاة جامعة ثم خرج فقال للراعي: أخبرهم فأخبرهم ، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: صدق ، والذي نفس محمد بيده ، لا تقوم الساعة حتى يكلم السباع الإنس ، ويكلم الرجل عذبة سوطه ، وشراك نعله ، ويخبره فخذ بهما أحدث أهله بعده وهذا إسناد على شرط الصحيح وقد صححه البيهقي ، ولم يروه إلا الترمذي من قول والذي نفسي بيده لا تقوم الساعة حتى يكلم السباع الإنس إلى آخره ، عن سفيان بن وكيع ، عن أبيه ، عن القاسم بن الفضل ثم قال: وهذا حديث حسن غريب صحيح ، لا نعرفه إلا من حديث القاسم ، وهو ثقة مأمون عند أهل الحديث ، وثقه يحيى وابن مهدي

“Abu Sa’id al-Khudri narrated: A wolf was chasing a goat, and a shepherd fought off the wolf and saved the goat. The wolf sat on its tail and said to the shepherd: ‘Don’t you fear Allah? Are you cheating me with regards to what Allah has provided for me?’ The shepherd exclaimed: ‘Praise be to Allah! A wolf is speaking to me as if it was a man!’ The wolf replied: ‘Shall I inform you of something even more incredible? In Yathrib, Muhammad is informing people about events which occurred a long time ago.’ The shepherd came to Madinah and then to the Prophet ﷺ and informed him about the incident. The Prophet summoned people and ordered the shepherd to narrate his story. The Prophet ﷺ then said: ‘By the One who has my soul in His Hand, the shepherd is speaking the truth. The Day of Judgement shall not occur until people speak to men, and a man’s limbs speak to him, and his thighs inform him about the actions of his family while he is absent.’” (Ahmad)

Chain of narration: Yazid – al-Qasim Bin al-Fadl al-Hadani – his father – Nadrah – Abu Sa’id al-Khudri

Ibn Kathir mentions that some scholars accepted narrations from al-Qasim al-Hadani. Despite this al-'Uqayli writes in the work *ad-Du'afa'* (a work describing weak narrators), vol 3 under the section on al-Qasim al-Hadani:

وقد روى قصة الذئب بإسناد غير هذا وليس بالثابت

“The story of the wolf has been narrated through other chains of narration than this, and it hasn't been proven.”

Ibn Kathir mentions another variant of the narration with another single chain of narration:

حدثنا أبو اليمان ، أنا شعيب ، حدثني عبد الله بن أبي حسين ، حدثني شهر ، أن أبا سعيد الخدري حدثه

“Abu al-Yaman narrated from Shu'aib who narrated from 'Abdullah Bin Abi Husain who narrated from Shahr that Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrated ... (Ahmad)

Chain of narration: Abu al-Yaman – Shu'ayb – Abdullah Bin Abi Husain – Shahr – Abu Sa'id al-Khudri

Ibn Kathir writes about this narration:

وهذا على شرط أهل السنن ولم يخرجوه

“This is according to the conditions of the scholars of *sunan*. However, they didn't include it.

The explanation of this could be what can be found in *Siyar al-A'lam* by adh-Dhahabi that Abu Dawud said:

سمعت محمد بن عوف يقول: لم يسمع أبو اليمان من شعيب بن أبي حمزة إلا كلمة

“I heard Muhammad Bin 'Awf say: Abu al-Yaman didn't hear anything but one word (or one sentence) from Shu'ayb Bin Abi Hamza.”

This explains why the Abu Dawud and other authors of the *sunan* collections didn't include the narration. This also explains why one should reject it, as the authors of the *sunan* collections did.

Ibn Kathir mentions that al-Baihaqi included the narration through another chain of narration:

وقد رواه البيهقي من حديث النفيلي قال: قرأت على معقل بن عبيد الله ، عن شهر بن حوشب ، عن أبي سعيد ، فذكره

“Al-Baihaqi narrated from the narration of an-Nufaili. He said: I was reading to Mu’aqil Bin ‘Ubaidullah from Shahr Bin Hawshib from Abi Sa’id, after which he mentioned it.”

Chain of narration 1: An-Nufayli – Shahr Bin Hawshib – Abu Sa’id

He mentions another chain of narration included by al-Baihaqi:

ثم رواه عن الحاكم وأبي سعيد بن أبي عمرو ، عن الأصم ، عن أحمد بن عبد الجبار ، عن يونس بن بكير ، عن عبد الحميد بن بهرام ، عن شهر بن حوشب ، عن أبي سعيد ، فذكره

“Then he narrated it from al-Hakim and Abi Sa’id Bin Abi ‘Amru from al-Asam from Ahmad Bin Abdul-Jabbar from Yunus Bin Bakir from ‘Abdul-Hameed Bin Bahram from Shahr Bin Hawshib from Abi Sa’id, and then he mentioned the narration.”

Chain of narration 2: al-Hakim and Abi Sa’id Bin Abi ‘Amru – al-Asam – Ahmad Bin Abdul-Jabbar – Yunus Bin Bakir – ‘Abdul-Hameed Bin Bahram – Shahr Bin Hawshib – Abi Sa’id

He also writes that Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal included another variant of the narration with another single chain of narration:

حدثنا عبد الرزاق ، أنا معمر ، عن أشعث بن عبد الله ، عن شهر بن حوشب ، عن أبي هريرة
”Abd ur-Razzaq narrated from Mu’ammār from ‘Ash’ab Bin ‘Abdullah from Shahr Bin Hawshib from Abu Hurairah.”

Chain of narration 3: Abd ur-Razzaq – Mu’ammār – ‘Ash’ab Bin ‘Abdullah – Shahr Bin Hawshib – Abu Hurairah

All three chains of narration lead back to Shahr Bin Hawshib, who is controversial and classified as *saduq* (truthful but makes mistakes) which is why some scholars didn't accept his narrations according to *Tabdheeb* vol 4 by Ibn Hajar and *Syar A'lam* vol 4 by adh-Dhahabi

Ibn Kathir writes that al-Hafidh Abu Nu'aim mentions the narration through another chain of narration:

ورواه الحافظ أبو نعيم ، من طريق عبد الرحمن بن يزيد بن تميم ، عن الزهري عن سعيد بن المسيب عن أبي سعيد ، فذكره

"Al-Hafidh Abu Nu'aim mentioned the narration through 'Abdur Rahman Bin Yazid Bin Tamim from az-Zuhri from Sa'id Bin al-Musayb from Abi Sa'id."

Chain of narration: 'Abdur Rahman Bin Yazid Bin Tamim – az-Zuhri – Sa'id Bin al-Musayb – Abu Sa'id

Adh-Dhahabi writes about him in *Siyar A'lam*:

صاحب مكحول فضعه الجماعة ... واعتقد أنه ابن جابر ، فوهم

"Companion of Mahkul, which is why a group declared him weak ... meaning, he is Ibn Jabir, and he imagined things."

Ibn Kathir writes that Abu Nu'aim mentions another variant of the narration in *Dala'il an-Nabuwah* with two singular chains of narration:

قال أبو نعيم في دلائل النبوة: ثنا عبد الله بن محمد بن جعفر ، ثنا محمد بن يحيى بن منده ، ثنا علي بن الحسن بن سالم ، ثنا الحسين الرفاء ، عن عبد الملك بن عمير ، عن أنس ، ح وحدثنا سليمان هو الطبراني ، ثنا عبد الله بن محمد بن ناجية ، ثنا هشام بن يونس اللؤلؤي ، ثنا حسين بن سليمان الرفاء ، عن عبد الملك بن عمير ، عن أنس بن مالك قال: كنت مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في غزوة تبوك فشددت على غنمي ، فجاء الذئب فأخذ منها شاة ، فاشتد الرعاء خلفه ، فقال: طعمة أطعمنيها الله تنزعونها مني! قال: فبهت القوم ، فقال: ما تعجبون من كلام الذئب وقد نزل الوحي على محمد ، فمن مصدق ومكذب ثم قال أبو نعيم : تفرد به حسين بن سليمان عن عبد الملك

Afterward, Ibn Kathir comments:

قلت: الحسين بن سليمان الرفاء هذا يقال له: الطلحي كوفي أورد له ابن عدي عن عبد الملك بن عمير أحاديث ، ثم قال: لا يتابع عليها

“I say: Al-Husain Bin Sulaiman ar-Rifa’ was called at-Talha. Kufi included narrations from Ibn ‘Uday from ‘Abdel-Malik Bin ‘Umair, and then he said: They (i.e., the narrations) shouldn’t be followed.”

This means one shouldn’t accept these two chains of narration.

Ibn Kathir mentions another variant of the narration through a chain of narration on the authority of al-Baihaqi:

قال البيهقي: أخبرنا أبو سعد الماليني ، أنا أبو أحمد بن عدي ، ثنا عبد الله بن أبي داود السجستاني ، ثنا يعقوب بن يوسف بن أبي عيسى ، ثنا جعفر بن جسر أخبرني أبي جسر ، ثنا عبد الرحمن بن حرملة ، عن سعيد بن المسيب قال: قال ابن عمر

“Abu Sa’d al-Malini narrated from Abu Ahmad Bin ‘Uday who narrated from Abdullah Bin Abi Dawud as-Sajsatani who narrated from Ya’qub Bin Yusuf Bin Abi ‘Isa who narrated from Ja’far Bin Jasr who narrated from Abi Jasr who narrated from Abd ur-Rahman Bin Harmalah who narrated from Sa’id Bin al-Musaib who said: ‘Ibn ‘Umar said ...”

Chain of narration: Abu Sa’d al-Malini – Abu Ahmad Bin ‘Uday – Abdullah Bin Abi Dawud as-Sajsatani – Ya’qub Bin Yusuf Bin Abi ‘Isa – Ja’far Bin Jasr – Abi Jasr – ‘Abd ur-Rahman Bin Harmalah – Sa’id Bin al-Musaib – Ibn ‘Umar

Some scholars praised ‘Abdullah Bin Abi Dawud. However, in *Siyar A’lam* by adh-Dhahabi, we find that his own father, Abu Dawud, called him a liar:

ابن عدي: أنبأنا علي بن عبد الله الداهري ، سمعت أحمد بن محمد بن عمرو كركرة ، سمعت علي بن الحسين بن الجنيد ، سمعت أبا داود يقول : ابني عبد الله كذاب

“Ibn ‘Uday: ‘Ali Bin Abdullah ad-Dahiri told us that he heard Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin ‘Amru Karkarah say: I heard ‘Ali Bin al-Husain Bin Junaid say: I heard Abu Dawud say: My son ‘Abdullah is a liar.”

There was an attempt from adh-Dhahabi's part to make it plausible that what is meant is that he is a liar regarding other topics than narrations. However, from the context, it's apparent when Abu Dawud says about his son that he is a liar that it concerns narrations.

A more explicit example is a quarrel between Ibn Saa'id (ash-Sheikh az-Zif) and 'Abdullah Ibn Abi Dawud, with al-Wazir attempting to reconcile between them, but the former says:

فقال الشيخ الزيف: الكذاب على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال الوزير: من الكذاب؟
قال: هذا

"Ash-Sheikh az-Zif said: He is a liar with regards to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Al-Wazir asked: Who is a liar? He replied: This one (i.e. 'Abdullah Ibn Abi Dawud)."

Ibn Kathir mentions a variant by al-Bukhari in the work *at-Tarikh* with a singular chain of narration:

حدثني أبو طلحة ، حدثني سفيان بن حمزة الأسلمي ، سمع عبد الله بن عامر الأسلمي ،
عن ربيعة بن أوس ، عن أنيس بن عمرو ، عن أهبان

"Abu Talhah narrated that Sufyan Bin Hamza al-Aslami narrated that Abdullah Bin 'Amir al-Aslami heard from Rabi'ah Bin Awais from Unais Bin 'Amru from Ahban (the shepherd)."

Chain of narration: Abu Talhah – Sufyan Bin Hamza al-Aslami – Abdullah Bin 'Amir al-Aslami – Rabi'ah Bin Awais – Unais Bin 'Amru – Ahban

Ibn Kathir mentions that al-Bukhari said the following about this chain of narration:

قال البخاري: إسناده ليس بالقوي

"Al-Bukhari said: This chain of narration isn't strong."

Ibn Kathir mentions another variant of the narration with a singular chain of narration:

وقد قال سعيد بن منصور: ثنا حبان بن علي ، ثنا عبد الملك بن عمير ، عن أبي الأوير الحارثي ، عن أبي هريرة قال: جاء الذئب فأقعى بين يدي النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وجعل يبصص بذنبه ، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: هذا وافد الذئاب ، جاء يسألکم أن تجعلوا له من أموالکم شيئا قالوا: والله لا نفعل وأخذ رجل من القوم حجرا فرماه ، فأدبر الذئب وله عواء ، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: الذئب وما الذئب؟ وقد رواه البيهقي ، عن الحاكم عن أبي عبد الله الأصبهاني ، عن محمد بن مسلمة ، عن يزيد بن هارون ، عن شعبة ، عن عبد الملك بن عمير به ورواه الحافظ أبو بكر البزار ، عن محمد بن المثنى ، عن غندر ، عن شعبة ، عن عبد الملك بن عمير ، عن رجل ، عن مكحول ، عن أبي هريرة ، فذكره ،

“Sa’id Bin Mansur said: Hibban Bin ‘Ali narrated that ‘Abdul-Malik Bin ‘Umar narrated from Abi al-Awbir al-Harithi from Abu Hurairah ...”

Chain of narration: Hibban Bin ‘Ali – ‘Abdul-Malik Bin ‘Umar – Abi al-Awbir al-Harithi – Abu Hurairah

He mentions another variant of the narration through another singular chain of narration, included by al-Baihaqi:

وعن يوسف بن موسى ، عن جرير بن عبد الحميد ، عن عبد الملك بن عمير ، عن أبي الأوير ، عن أبي هريرة

“Yusuf Bin Musa narrated from Jarir Bin Abdel-Hameed from Abdel-Malik Bin ‘Umar from Abi al-Awbir from Abu Hurairah.”

Chain of narration: Yusuf Bin Musa – Jarir Bin Abdel-Hameed – Abdel-Malik Bin ‘Umar – Abi al-Awbir – Abu Hurairah

Ibn Kathir mentions another variant of the narration with another single chain of narration:

وروى الواقدي ، عن رجل سماه ، عن المطلب بن عبد الله بن حنطب

“Al-Waqidi narrated from a man with a good reputation who narrated from al-Mutallib Bin ‘Abdullah Bin Hantab.”

Chain of narration: Al-Waqidi – a man – Mutallib Bin ‘Abdullah Bin Hantab

It's evident that narrations with chains of narration, including unknown people, should be rejected.

Ibn Kathir mentions another variant of the narration with a single chain of narration quoted by Abu Nu'aim:

وقال أبو نعيم: ثنا سليمان بن أحمد، ثنا معاذ بن المثنى، ثنا محمد بن كثير، ثنا سفيان، ثنا الأعمش، عن شمر بن عطية، عن رجل من مزينة أو جهينة،
 “Abu Nu'aim said: Sulaiman Bin Ahmad narrated that Mu'adh Bin Muthanna narrated that Muhammad Bin Kathir narrated that Sufyan narrated that al-A'mash narrated from Shmr Bin 'Atiyyah from a man who was from Mazinah or Jahinah.”

Chain of narration: Abu Nu'aim – Sulaiman Bin Ahmad – Mu'adh Bin Muthanna – Muhammad Bin Kathir – al-A'mash – Shmr Bin 'Atiyyah – a man

There is an unknown person in the chain of narration who is unknown to the extent that we don't even know where he came from.

The variants mentioned above of the narration about a talking wolf along with their chains of narration should, therefore, be rejected for obvious reasons.

There is a variant of the narration about a wolf and a cow talking to a man. The course of action in the narration takes place before the time of the Prophet, i.e., the narration should be placed in the era of Revelation:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ صَلَّى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَلَاةَ الصُّبْحِ، ثُمَّ أَقْبَلَ عَلَى النَّاسِ، فَقَالَ بَيْنَا رَجُلٌ يَسُوقُ بَقْرَةً إِذْ رَكِبَهَا فَضَرَبَهَا فَقَالَتْ إِنَّا لَمْ نُخْلَقْ لِهَذَا، إِنَّمَا خُلِقْنَا لِلْحَرْثِ فَقَالَ النَّاسُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ بَقْرَةٌ تَكَلَّمُ فَقَالَ فَإِنِّي أُوْمِنُ بِهَذَا أَنَا وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ - وَمَا هُمَا ثَمَّ - وَبَيْنَمَا رَجُلٌ فِي غَنَمِهِ إِذْ عَدَا الذَّنْبُ فَذَهَبَ مِنْهَا بِشَاةٍ، فَطَلَبَ حَتَّى كَانَتْ اسْتَنْقَذَهَا مِنْهُ، فَقَالَ لَهُ الذَّنْبُ هَذَا اسْتَنْقَذَتْهَا مِنِّي فَمَنْ لَهَا يَوْمَ السَّبْعِ، يَوْمَ لَا رَاعِيَ لَهَا غَيْرِي فَقَالَ النَّاسُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ذَنْبٌ يَتَكَلَّمُ قَالَ فَإِنِّي أُوْمِنُ بِهَذَا أَنَا وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ وَمَا هُمَا ثَمَّ وَحَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ مِسْعَرٍ، عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِمِثْلِهِ

“Abu Hurairah narrated that Once Allah's Messenger offered the morning prayer and then faced the people and said: ‘While a man was driving a cow, he suddenly rode over it and beat it. The cow said: ‘We have not been created for this, but we have been created for plowing.’ On that, the people said astonished: ‘Glorified be Allah! A cow speaks!’ The Prophet said: ‘I believe this, and Abu Bakr and ‘Umar too, believe it, although neither of them was present there.’ While a person was amongst his sheep, a wolf attacked and took one of the sheep. The man chased the wolf till he saved it from the wolf, whereupon the wolf said: ‘You have saved it from me; but who will guard it on the day of the wild beasts when there will be no shepherd to guard them except me (because of riots and afflictions)?’ The people said surprisingly: ‘Glorified be Allah! A wolf speaks!’ The Prophet said: ‘But I believe this, and Abu Bakr and ‘Umar too, believe this, although neither of them was present there.’” (al-Bukhari)

Initially, the narration is in line with the narrations about the People of the Cave, Maryam, and others who experienced that the laws of nature were canceled at some point, which might explain why some scholars accepted the narration.

However, Abu Hurairah is the only one to narrate this variant, and the chain of narration is singular. We’ve already described that he confused narrators. Especially with regards to stories about the pre-Islamic period, the narrations of Ka’b were confused with narrations of the Prophet ﷺ by him and by others. Imam Muslim mentions the following in his book *at-Tamiz* about narrations by Abu Hurairah:

قال لنا بسر بن سعيد: اتقوا الله وتحفظوا من الحديث، فوالله لقد رأيتنا نجالس أبا هريرة فيحدث عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، ويحدثنا عن كعب الأحبار ثم يقوم، فأسمع بعض من كان معنا يجعل حديث رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن كعب، وحديث كعب عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

“Bisr Bin Sa’id said: Fear Allah and be cautious with (his) narrations, for by Allah, once we were sitting with Abu Hurairah, and he narrated from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he narrated from Ka’b al-Ahbar, and then he left. Then I heard someone who was with us ascribing the narrations of the Messenger of Allah to Ka’b and the narrations of Ka’b to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.”

Should one accept this narration, then one must take into account the probability of error, i.e., it mustn't be accepted in an absolute manner, and one mustn't criticize people who don't accept it. If one believes, that its chain of narration, a single chain of narration, isn't strong enough to make it plausible that a cow and a wolf spoke to a man, then one would naturally reject the narration.

A note on the narrations in the intermediate period and in the period after the era of Revelation: The whole purpose with the science of *hadith* is to preserve the Revelation; It's not binding to take a stance regarding it, as the Revelation concerns our beliefs and our actions, whereas narrations unrelated to the Revelation aren't binding whatsoever. I.e., Islamic law doesn't oblige us to take a stance towards such narrations. At the end of the day, they're totally irrelevant for the Islamic message. The Qur'an is a miracle independently of whether or not the companions of the Prophet or others after the death of the Prophet experienced *karamah* or not. So, it doesn't change anything with regards to the Islamic message whether or not people in this period received *karamah* or not. Actually, the Revelation is unaffected with others than the Prophet ﷺ experiencing cancellations of laws of nature, if the Revelation doesn't suggest it has occurred.

In the case of authentic texts describing that the Prophet ﷺ canceled one or various laws of nature, our acknowledgment and belief will be on the same level as the strength of the authentic texts demand, i.e., if the texts are absolute, then the confidence or conviction will also be absolute. If the texts don't constitute absolute proof, then the belief or conviction won't be absolute either.

It's easier to accept narrations about the Prophet ﷺ canceling one or various laws of nature after accepting the fact that he was a messenger of Allah ﷻ and the Qur'an as the evidence for his Prophethood.

It's harder to accept narrations about others than the Prophet ﷺ experiencing one or various laws of nature being canceled which don't involve the Prophet ﷺ, which is why it's debatable what to do in the situation when one finds authentic narrations about it. When is it sufficient evidence independent of Revelation to substantiate that a cancellation of the laws of nature has occurred?

One can't claim that it's exactly the same, if the sum of multiple chains of narration – let's call the sum A – support that the Prophet ﷺ performed a miracle, and if A supports that someone else received a cancellation of the laws of nature. The significant difference is that we've already accepted that the Prophet ﷺ can experience abolition of one or various laws of nature due to the Qur'an which is in itself a cancellation of the laws of nature. Thus, it's not the chains of narration isolated, which establishes that abolition of the laws of nature has occurred. It's substantiated by Revelation, making it plausible to begin with. Also, conversely, without the support of Revelation, it should be rejected as myths or tales.

Likewise, it can be argued when an authentic narration about someone besides the Prophet ﷺ experiencing a cancellation of the laws of nature is strong enough to be binding. Significant events usually give rise to myths.

Formation of myths is typical to epochal events; for instance, battles or the rise of religions - or even movements. The motives for such can be many; from good intentions about raising an appeal, the morale amongst troops, or followers of religions or movements. However, good intentions and noble purposes do not change the fact that it's reprehensive to employ lies and formation of myths – also in the case of Islamic history or so-called Islamic interests.

In the following, we'll examine two widespread myths with a behavior-controlling function.

The good life

There are two widespread variants of empty promises rather than superstition, but since they are tightly connected to ideas about the future, we'll include them in this examination of superstition.

The underlying idea is, that if one cleanses oneself enough and achieves a close relationship with Allah ﷻ, then the relationship evolves into a friendship with Allah ﷻ; and one becomes one of the allies of Allah (waliullah) similar to the case of *karamah*, however, instead of *karamah* or as an addition to *karamah*, life shall be good.

These two variants differ with regards to how this cleansing of the self takes place and this close relationship with ﷻ is achieved; one of them focus on the perception of spirituality of its followers, whereas the followers of the other camp focus on their perception of Islamic jurisprudence. Both camps have their throng of scholars which they lean on, and both camps expect the closer they draw near to Allah ﷻ, the better their lives shall become.

The problem is, they determine what a good life is using their own minds, and when they don't achieve it or when they don't experience happiness in the long term, they are at risk of losing hope or faith – or both. Some of the consequences can be:

- A misconception that the way the person is living can't be correct, as the person hasn't achieved happiness or a good life based on the person's own definition of what a good life entails, thus the person makes a u-turn in with regards to numerous topics.
- Hopelessness with regards to Islam and Islamic practice, as the expected result wasn't achieved, however, the person maintains a positive view on Islam while feeling that the person can't live up to the expectations.
- The glaring case after the person becomes utterly hopeless with regards to Islam and Islamic practice; the person then concludes that Islam doesn't work – which leads to either a neutral perception of Islam or even an antipathy towards Islam.

Knowledge about events being good or bad presumes omniscience, i.e., it presumes all knowledge about everybody in the present and the future to determine if what we are experiencing in life is good or bad. This is due to two apparent aspects:

- Good and bad are adjectives which indicate intrinsic relativity and/or subjectivity in the terms themselves. Something is good compared to or according to something else – external to the mind, and the same applies to something described as bad.

- The longterm consequences of an incident or an event are unknown, along with what the alternatives to the incident or event could have been.

To elaborate on the first aspect: It's important to distinguish between abstract and concrete descriptions and the results of linguistic conventions. Justice, goodness, mercy, thoughtfulness, being moderate, etc. are abstract notions which per linguistic convention are defined as positively charged terms, whereas their contents are diffuse. I.e., in most languages these terms are understood positively, however, it varies what they constitute of concrete notions across cultures, ideologies, religions, philosophies, and languages, so it's not self-evident what a good or bad life is.

To elaborate on the second aspect: It's unknown if an incident or an event leads to something good or something terrible in the long term during life, and likewise, it's unknown if it leads to something good or something terrible in the Hereafter.

Regarding the life of this world, various experiences shape one's personality, for instance, hardship and affliction might be considered hidden blessings, as they might contribute to one being motivated to exert one's utmost and develop one's abilities to unprecedented heights. From this perspective, it's possible to argue that all hardship and every affliction someone experienced actually were part of a hidden blessing.

Likewise, we don't know if the alternative to a disaster would've been an even greater disaster, thus making the one we experienced better than the alternative.

It's evident that we don't know the consequences in the Hereafter of incidents in this life; a terrible incident might give access to eternal bliss, thus actually being a good thing. Likewise, a really positive incident might give access to Hell, thus actually being a bad thing.

Actions are merely actions, and the mind can but register, name, and categorize them according to the previous information, the person possesses. I.e., if A hits B with a stick, then C's mind merely registers

that A hit B; this is as far the mind goes. The sense impression of the incident (the sensuous reality) is transmitted through the relevant senses (sight) by the functioning brain which fetches relevant information associated with the incident (it's called hitting, it's a stick, usually it hurts, I wouldn't like to experience it, etc.). In this situation, C would draw conclusions from an ideology, a philosophy, a religion, upbringing, experiences, empathy, etc. to measure, weigh, and conclude if the action was good, evil, neutral, not so good, recommended, etc. in that context.

For one's ideas of good and bad to be justified, a connection between the idea and the Revelation of the Creator is a must; everything else would yield speculation.

This conception is crucial to the Islamic jurisprudence, which is why most books dealing with the principles of Islamic jurisprudence begin their books with a discussion explaining that Allah ﷻ is the Legislator. This explains, so to say that the spirit in Islam is the perception of one's relation with Allah ﷻ based on Revelation.

The motivation for living according to the Islamic laws and rules is likewise a religious motivation and not benefit or anything else.

This is the aspect jurists deal with, as it's the foundation of Islamic jurisprudence. The other aspect connected to Theology is, however, ignored by many people.

The legal aspect on good and evil is about whether it's good or bad that someone undertakes a particular action, whereas the religious aspect on good and bad is about whether it's good or bad that a specific event, incident or the like took place or a particular action was undertaken.

One of the narrations that beautifully illustrate this the clearest is the story about Musa and Khidr. Allah ﷻ informed us in the Qur'an about when Musa met Khidr:

﴿ قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَى هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰ أَن تُعَلِّمَ مِنَّمَا عَلَّمْتَ رُشْدًا ۖ ﴿٦٦﴾ قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ۖ ﴿٦٧﴾ وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ خُبْرًا ۖ ﴿٦٨﴾ قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلَا

أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا ﴿٦٩﴾ قَالَ فَإِنِ اتَّبَعْتَنِي فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّى أُحْدِثَ لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٧٠﴾
فَانْطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا قَالَ أَخَرَقْتُهَا لِتُغْرِقَ أَهْلَهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا إِمْرًا ﴿٧١﴾
قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٢﴾ قَالَ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِي مِنْ أَمْرِي
عُسْرًا ﴿٧٣﴾ فَانْطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَامًا فَقَتَلَهُ قَالَ أَقْتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا
نُكْرًا ﴿٧٤﴾ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٥﴾ قَالَ إِن سَأَلْتُكَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدَهَا
فَلَا تُصَاحِبْنِي قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِنْ لَدُنِّي عُذْرًا ﴿٧٦﴾ فَانْطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا أَتَيَا أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ اسْتَطْعَمَا أَهْلَهَا
فَأَبَوْا أَنْ يُضَيِّقُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْقَضَ فَأَقَامَهُ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَاتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا
﴿٧٧﴾ قَالَ هَذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنِكَ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأْوِيلِ مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٨﴾ أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ
فَكَانَتْ لِمَسَاكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُمْ مَلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا
﴿٧٩﴾ وَأَمَّا الْغُلَامُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنَيْنِ فَخَشِينَا أَنْ يُرْهِقَهُمَا طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا ﴿٨٠﴾ فَأَرَدْنَا أَنْ يُبْدِلَهُمَا
رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِنْهُ زَكَةً وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا ﴿٨١﴾ وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ
تَحْتَهُ كَنْزٌ لَهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَا أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنْزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِّنْ
رَّبِّكَ وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ عَنْ أَمْرِي ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ ذِي الْقُرْنَيْنِ
قُلْ سَأَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٨٣﴾

“Musa asked him: ‘Can I follow you so that you would teach me the guidance that you have received?’ He replied: ‘You will not be able to have patience with me. How can you remain patient with that which you do not fully understand?’ Musa said: ‘If God wishes, you will find me patient and I shall not disobey any of your orders.’ He said to Musa: ‘If you will follow me, do not ask me about anything until I tell you the story about it.’ They started their journey, and later they embarked in a boat in which he made a hole. Musa asked him: ‘Did you make the hole to drown the people on board? This is certainly very strange.’ He said: ‘Did I not tell you that you would not be able to remain patient with me?’ Musa said: ‘Please, forgive my forgetfulness. Do not oblige me with what is difficult for me to endure.’ They continued on their journey until they met a young boy whom he killed. Musa said: ‘How could you murder an innocent soul? This is certainly a horrible act.’ He responded: ‘Did I not tell you that you will not be able to remain patient with me?’ Musa said: ‘If I ask you such questions again, abandon me; you will have enough reason to do so.’ They continued on their journey again until they reached a town. They asked the people there for food, but no one accepted them as their guests. They found there a wall of a house which was on the verge of tumbling to the ground. The

companion of Musa repaired that wall. Musa said: 'You should have received some money for your labor.' He replied: 'This is where we should depart from one another. I shall give an explanation to you for all that I have done for which you could not remain patient. The boat belonged to some destitute people who were using it as a means of their living in the sea. The king had imposed a certain amount of tax on every undamaged boat. I damaged it so that they would not have to pay the tax. The young boy had very faithful parents. We were afraid that out of love for him, they would lose their faith in God and commit rebellion, so we decided that their Lord should replace him with a better and more virtuous son. The tumbling wall belonged to two orphans in the town whose father was a righteous person. Underneath the wall, there was a treasure that belonged to them. Your Lord wanted the orphans to find the treasure through the mercy of your Lord when they mature. I did not repair the wall out of my own desire. These were the explanations of my deeds about which you could not remain patient.'" (18:65-82)

Still, we find Muslims ignoring the powerful lesson that can be learned by this narration, with people insisting on concluding if a particular event was good or bad. And when they fail to find the cause of the event, they become superstitious and try to change the situation – ignorant of the fact that they actually just by-passed a central part of monotheism. The idea of good and evil is beyond the scope of the mind, and Allah ﷻ knows, and we do not, just like Allah ﷻ informed us with the example of warfare:

﴿ كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

"Fighting is made mandatory for you, but you dislike it. You may not like something which, in fact, is for your good and something that you may love, in fact, may be evil. God knows, but you do not know." (2:216)

We might have an idea about what is right and wrong to do based on laws, but this doesn't mean that we also know what is good or bad to do, or if events are good or bad, as such knowledge presumes

knowledge of the future which no man can claim to possess. And thus, the core idea in many superstitions is flawed from this angle.

Several Koranic verses and narrations explain how we should view life, i.e., they are normative, which is proper usage of non-conclusive texts. Some of them:

﴿وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

“We shall test you through fear, hunger, loss of life, property, and crops. Give glad news to the people who have patience. (2:155)

عَنْ أَنَسٍ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِعَبْدِهِ الْخَيْرَ عَجَّلَ لَهُ الْعُقُوبَةَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِعَبْدِهِ الشَّرَّ أَمْسَكَ عَنْهُ بِذَنْبِهِ حَتَّى يُوفَى بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Anas narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘When Allah wants good for his slave, He hastens his punishment in the world. And when He wants bad for His slave, He withholds his sins from him until he appears before Him on the Day of Judgement.’ (at-Tirmidhi)

عَنْ صُهَيْبٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ إِنَّ أَمْرَهُ كُلَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَلَيْسَ ذَاكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ

“Suhaib narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ‘Strange are the ways of a believer for there is good in every affair of his and this is not the case with anyone else except in the case of a believer for if he has an occasion to feel delight, he thanks (God), thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble and shows resignation (and endures it patiently), there is a good for him in it.’” (Muslim)

This creates a subtle balance between accepting what one can't change and changing what actually can be changed.

The level of damage inflicted on people by this formation of myths living according to the Islamic laws shall lead to living a good life is in fact as harmful as superstition, as people after accepting the myths might experience a major disappointment, become hopeless with regards to attaining perfection, or even reject Islam, due to associating Islam with the myths.

Therefore, good intentions in this matter are irrelevant, as the harm one afflict can be beyond repair.

Conclusion

Until the death of the Messenger of Allah, one could make it plausible and through Revelation confirm that someone had received *karamah*; but after the death of the Prophet, and the end of Revelation, it's not possible to verify that people have received *karamah*, why such claims should be rejected as myths. Hoaxes and weak narrations are the cause of the idea of *karamah* after the end of Revelation.

There is a connection between the idea of *karamah* and the benefits of living an Islamic life. Both the concept of *karamah* and other expected results of living an Islamic life can lead to hopelessness and antipathy towards Islamic practice due to disappointment.

Religiousness & medicine

The topic of the medicine of the Prophet is a topic that has really been misunderstood by some Muslims.

The misunderstanding is due to a wrong understanding of the infallibility of the Prophet (al-'isma) and the role of Revelation.

A core idea in the Islamic worldview is that the Prophet ﷺ is unable to make mistakes in the deliverance of Revelation from Allah ﷻ, as it would undermine the Qur'an. So, initially, nothing must have been removed from or added to the Qur'an by him ﷺ.

Then, the sunnah of the Prophet is the field of Islamic Principles of Jurisprudence (usul ul-fiqh) as everything the Prophet ﷺ said, did, and what he accepted people around him did.

His actions can be divided into natural actions, which he undertook as a human being, and actions which he undertook as a Messenger. The latter can be divided further into actions we should imitate and actions which were only allowed for him ﷺ to undertake.

The same applies to his statements; some of them are statements by him ﷺ as a human being, whereas others are statements as a Messenger.

The Revelation is limited to what he ﷺ does, says, and accepts as a Messenger, and his infallibility is limited to this scope. This means that he can be mistaken, misjudge, or misunderstand in the scopes not belonging to Revelation. Several authentic narrations clarify this. Some of them:

حَدَّثَنِي رَافِعُ بْنُ خَدِيجٍ، قَالَ قَدِمَ نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْمَدِينَةَ وَهُمْ يَأْتُرُونَ النَّخْلَ يَقُولُونَ يُلْقَحُونَ النَّخْلَ فَقَالَ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ قَالُوا كُنَّا نَصْنَعُهُ قَالَ لَعَلَّكُمْ لَوْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا كَانَ خَيْرًا فَتَرَكُوهُ فَتَفَقَّصْتُ أَوْ فَتَفَقَّصْتُ - قَالَ - فَذَكَرُوا ذَلِكَ لَهُ فَقَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ إِذَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَخُذُوا بِهِ وَإِذَا أَمَرْتُكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ رَأْيٍ فَإِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ قَالَ عِكْرِمَةُ أَوْ نَحْوُ هَذَا . قَالَ الْمُعَقَّرِيُّ فَتَفَقَّصْتُ . وَلَمْ يَشْكُ

“Rafi’ Bin Khadij reported that the Messenger of Allah came to Medina and the people had been grafting the trees. He asked: ‘What are you doing?’ They replied: ‘We are grafting them,’ whereupon he said: ‘It may perhaps be good for you if you do not do that,’ so they abandoned this practice (and the date-palms) began to yield less fruit. They made a mention of it (to the Holy Prophet), whereupon he said: ‘I am a human being, so when I command you about a thing pertaining to religion, do accept it, and when I command you about a thing out of my personal opinion, keep it in mind that I am a human being.’ ‘Ikrima reported that he said something like this.” (Muslim)

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَمِعَ أَصْوَاتًا فَقَالَ مَا هَذَا الصَّوْتُ قَالُوا النَّخْلُ يُؤْبَرُونَ فَقَالَ لَوْ لَمْ يُفْعَلُوا لَصَلَحَ فَلَمْ يُؤْبَرُوا عَامَئِدٍ فَصَارَ شَيْصًا فَذَكَرُوا لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ إِنْ كَانَ شَيْئًا مِنْ أَمْرِ دُنْيَاكُمْ فَشَأْنُكُمْ بِهِ وَإِنْ كَانَ شَيْئًا مِنْ أُمُورِ دِينِكُمْ فَأَلَيْ

“It was narrated from ‘Aisha that the Prophet heard some sounds and asked: ‘What is this noise?’ They said: ‘Palm trees that are being pollinated.’ He said: ‘If they did not do that it would be better.’ So, they did not pollinate them that year, and the dates did not mature properly. they mentioned that to the Prophet, and he said: ‘If it is one of the matters of your religion, then refer to me.’” (Ibn Majah)

عَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ، زَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سَمِعَ جَلْبَةَ خَصْمٍ بِيَابِ حُجْرَتِهِ فَخَرَجَ إِلَيْهِمْ فَقَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ وَإِنَّهُ يَأْتِينِي الْخَصْمُ فَلَعَلَّ بَعْضَهُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ أَبْلَغَ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَأَحْسِبُ أَنَّهُ صَادِقٌ فَأَقْضِي لَهُ فَمَنْ قَضَيْتُ لَهُ بِحَقِّ مُسْلِمٍ فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ قِطْعَةٌ مِنَ النَّارِ فَلْيَحْمِلْهَا أَوْ يَذَرْهَا

“Umm Salamah, the wife of the Messenger of Allah, reported that the Messenger of Allah heard the clamor of contenders at the door of his apartment. He went to them and said: ‘I am a human being, and the claimants bring to me (the dispute) and perhaps some of them are more eloquent than the others. I judge him to be on the right and thus decide in his favor. So, he whom I, by my judgment, (give the undue share) out of the right of a Muslim. I give him a portion of Fire; he may burden himself with it or abandon it.’” (Muslim)

عَنْ أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ، وَإِنَّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُونَ إِلَيَّ، وَلَعَلَّ بَعْضَكُمْ أَنْ يَكُونَ الْحَنُّ يَحْجِيهِ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَأَقْضِي نَحْوَ مَا أَسْمَعُ، فَمَنْ قَضَيْتَ لَهُ بِحَقِّ أَخِيهِ شَيْئًا فَلَا يَأْخُذْهُ، فَإِنَّمَا أَقْطَعُ لَهُ قِطْعَةً مِنَ النَّارِ

“Umm Salamah narrated that the Messenger of Allah r said: ‘I am only a human being, and you people (opponents) come to me with your cases. And it may be that one of you can present his case eloquently in a more convincing way than the other, and I give my verdict according to what I hear. So, if ever I judge (by error) and give the right of a brother to his other (brother), then he (the latter) should not take it, for I am giving him only a piece of Fire.’” (al-Bukhari)

Medicine is a part of the natural sciences which are a part of the affairs of this world, technology, and industry. It's outside the scope and theme of Revelation, and it should be evident that it is left to mankind to research, develop, and produce medicine.

Still, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah writes in *at-Tibb an-Nabawi*:

وليس طبه صلى الله عليه وسلم كطب الأطباء فإن طب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم متيقن قطعي إلهي صادر عن الوحي ومشكاة النبوة وكمال العقل وطب غيره أكثره حدس وظنون وتجارب ولا ينكر عدم انتفاع كثير من المرضى بطب النبوة فإنه إنما ينتفع به من تلقاه بالقبول واعتقاد الشفاء به وكمال التلقي له بالإيمان والإذعان فهذا القرآن الذي هو شفاء لما في الصدور - إن لم يتلق هذا التلقي - لم يحصل به شفاء الصدور من أدوائها بل لا يزيد المنافقين إلا رجسًا إلى رجسهم ومرضًا إلى مرضهم وأين يقع طب الأبدان منه فطب النبوة لا يناسب إلا الإبدان الطبية كما أن شفاء القرآن لا يناسب إلا الأرواح الطبية والقلوب الحية فأعراض الناس عن طب النبوة كأعراضهم عن طب الإستشفاء بالقرآن الذي هو الشفاء النافع وليس ذلك لقصور في الدواء ولكن لخبث الطبيعة وفساد المحل وعدم قبوله

“The medicine of the Prophet is not like the medicine of doctors and physicians. The medicine of the Prophet is the effective treatment which comes through revelation and the guidance of the Prophet, which is supplemented with an excellent and perfect mind. Likewise, it might be mentioned that the majority of the medicine ordained by others than a prophet is based on hypotheses, observations, and experimentation. It's a fact that many people do not benefit from Prophetic medicine, as it only helps those who believe in it and confirm

it. I.e., only those who believe it shall help them, and they submit to it. If the Koran, which is a cure for what the heart conceals, isn't acknowledged and accepted with belief, then it won't function as a cure for the heart. Rather, the Koran shall only add to even more evil and illness in the heart of the hypocrite. Prophetic medicine is only suitable for good and pure bodies, just like the Koran is only suitable for pious souls and hearts. So, when people ignore prophetic medicine, it's like ignoring the help and guidance in the Koran, which is the most effective medicine. So, when the medicine doesn't have an effect, it is due to the negativity in the body and the soul, which isn't suitable for accepting the medicine, and not because the medicine doesn't work." – End of quote.

There are several problems with this text; (1) the claims are unsubstantiated (2) they can't be falsified (3) it's a misunderstanding of what the role of the Revelation and the Prophet is. In the following, we'll have a closer look at them.

Unsubstantiated claims about the medicine of the Prophet

There are two central claims in the text mentioned above:

1. "Prophetic medicine is not like what doctors and physicians offer. Prophetic medicine is the effective treatment and cure which comes through Revelation and guidance of the Prophet.
2. It's a fact that many people do not benefit from prophetic medicine since it only helps those who confirm it and believe in it. Prophetic medicine is only suitable for good and pure bodies, just like the Koran is only suitable for pious souls and hearts. So, when people ignore prophetic medicine, it's like ignoring the help and the guidance in the Koran, which is the most effective medicine. So, when the medicine doesn't work, it is due to the negativity in the body and in the soul, which aren't suitable to accept the medicine, and not because the medicine doesn't work."

None of them can be substantiated or falsified, and they are a result of a misunderstanding of the role of Revelation and the Prophet ﷺ.

Nothing suggests in an absolute way that the medicine of the Prophet is part of Revelation and not just merely a result of the knowledge available at the time. In fact, it can be proven that the Prophet ﷺ had both access to the perception of medicine of other civilizations and that he employed their knowledge. Once, the Prophet ﷺ considered prohibiting intercourse with breastfeeding women (al-ghilah), but he saw that the Persians and the Romans don't experience any harm to their children, so he refrained from prohibiting it:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، عَنِ ابْنَةِ وَهْبٍ، وَهِيَ جُدَامَةُ - قَالَتْ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ أُرَدْتُ أَنْ أَنْهَى عَنِ الْغِيلَالِ فَإِذَا فَارِسٌ وَالرُّومُ يَفْعَلُونَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ أَوْلَادَهُمْ

"Aishah narrated from Wahb's daughter - and she is Judamah - who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) saying: 'I wanted to prohibit al-Ghilah, but the Persians and Romans did it, and they did not kill their children.'" (at-Tirmidhi)

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، عَنْ جُدَامَةَ بِنْتِ وَهْبٍ الْأَسَدِيَّةِ، أَنَّهَا سَمِعَتْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ لَقَدْ هَمَمْتُ أَنْ أَنْهَى عَنِ الْغِيلَةِ حَتَّى ذُكِّرْتُ أَنَّ الرُّومَ وَالْفَارِسَ يَصْنَعُونَ ذَلِكَ فَلَا يَضُرُّ أَوْلَادَهُمْ

"Aishah narrated from Judamah bint Wahb al-Asadiyyah that she heard the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W) saying: 'I intended to prohibit al-Ghilah until I remembered that the Persians and Romans do that, without any harm to their children.'" (at-Tirmidhi)

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ جُدَامَةَ بِنْتِ وَهْبٍ، حَدَّثَتْهَا أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَقَدْ هَمَمْتُ أَنْ أَنْهَى عَنِ الْغِيلَةِ حَتَّى ذُكِّرْتُ أَنَّ فَارِسَ وَالرُّومَ يَصْنَعُهُ وَقَالَ إِسْحَاقُ يَصْنَعُونَهُ فَلَا يَضُرُّ أَوْلَادَهُمْ

"It was narrated from 'Aishah that Judamah bint Wahb told her that the Messenger of Allah said: 'I was thinking of forbidding Ghilah until I remembered that the Persians do it and the Romans' - (one of the narrators) Ishaq said: '(They) do that - and it does not harm their children.'" (an-Nasa'i)

The idea of the medicine of the Prophet can't be falsified

Ibn Qayyim wrote: *It's a fact that many people don't benefit from prophetic medicine because it only helps those who confirm it and believe in it.* However, how can this be substantiated when the Revelation doesn't mention this, i.e., there isn't an Islamic text saying this? When there isn't an

Islamic text from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ or Allah ﷻ saying: *Only the believers in the medicine of the Prophet shall benefit from it*, then it's a requirement that it can be proven by experimentation. Otherwise, it should be rejected as an unsubstantiated claim and unprovable claim.

One might think, that one could experiment and thus test this, however, it's not falsifiable, as it's impossible to objectively measure to what extent people believe in something. It can't be justified to use the effect of natural medicine as an indicator for the belief or attitude of someone towards the natural medicine in question – or towards the originator of the medicine for that matter. It corresponds to me saying: *If you believe, I know the cure to cancer, AIDS, SARS, Ebola, yes even blindness and deafness, then you and others should merely eat an apple a day. If you or others aren't cured, then it wasn't the apple which failed to work; instead, it was lack of faith in believing that the apple is the cure – and it might even be due to a lack of confidence in me.* It would be impossible to blame me or the apple; the conclusion would be that the apple works as it should, but instead, something is wrong with the patient.

Throughout history, many quacks have deceived people into buying panacea or healing through faith in various religious communities, etc. The charlatans throughout history all had this underlying argument in common; that their cures can heal people, and if they don't work, then it's not the cures which failed; instead, the problem lied with people themselves. This is why it's sad to find that some scholars, unknowingly, depict the Prophet ﷺ as a quack by drawing on this kind of argumentation which characterizes quacks.

The role of the Revelation

If we consider the role or theme of the Revelation, then it's clear that it deals with normative topics; determining laws and rules, the perception of actions, things, and so forth in life, the connection between what was before this earthly life and what shall happen after death, and how this earthly life is connected to the two. I.e., the topics which are outside the scope of the mind. It doesn't make any sense that the last message to mankind should deal with matters which we can examine ourselves employing science such as medicine, biology, chemistry, technology, etc.

Ibn Khaldun explains in *al-Muqaddimah*, vol 1, that it's not part of the Revelation and nor is it a part of the mission of the Prophet to instruct us in medicine:

والطب المنقول في الشرعيات من هذا القبيل، وليس من الوحي في شيء، وإنما أمرٌ كان عادياً للعرب، ووقع في ذكر أحوال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من نوع ذكر أحوال التي هي عادة وجيلة، لا من جهة أن ذلك مشروع على ذلك النحو من العمل. فإنه صلى الله عليه وسلم إنما بعث ليعلمنا الشرائع، ولم يبعث لتعريف الطب ولا غيره من العاديات، وقد وقع له في شأن تلقيح النخل ما وقع، فقال: أنتم أعلم بأمور دنياكم. فلا ينبغي أن يحمل شيء من الذي وقع من الطب الذي وقع في الأحاديث المنقولة على أنه مشروع، فليس هناك ما يدل عليه. اللهم إلا إذا استعمل على جهة التبرك وصدق العقد الإيماني، فيكون له أثر عظيم في النفع. وليس ذلك في الطب المزاجي، وإنما هو من آثار الكلمة الإيمانية، كما وقع في مداواة المبطلون بالعسل

“And the practice of medicine transmitted to us belongs to that category, and it's not part of Revelation. Rather, it's something which was common amongst the Arabs. As for the things mentioned about the Prophet ﷺ in that regard, then it's likewise related to natural actions. He ﷺ was sent to instruct us about laws, and he ﷺ wasn't sent to instruct us about medicine or anything else in nature. And there was an incident concerning datepalms where he ﷺ said: “You are more knowledgeable concerning affairs of your world.” Therefore it's not justifiable to use narrations on events concerning the practice of medicine as are narrated in ahadith as if it was Revelation. It can be used for seeking blessings and to confirm the faith in the cases of a definitive text like, for instance, treating stomach pain with honey.”

The thing is, the Prophet ﷺ wasn't sent to instruct us about sciences we, ourselves, can examine. There are, however, some Koranic verses in which Allah ﷻ uses examples in nature to draw our attention to the order in nature, His omnipotence, His kindness towards us, etc. In this context, Allah ﷻ mentions things, in which we find benefit.

Allah ﷻ says about the bees:

﴿يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

“From out of their bellies comes a drink of different color in which there is a cure for the human being. In this, there is evidence (of the truth) for the people of understanding.” (16:69)

The verse doesn't explain, exactly what it is about honey that is a cure to which diseases. The purpose of this example and others is to make us ponder – not to make us build a medical industry based on honey. The verse doesn't rule out, that mankind might, at some point discover more effective treatments than using honey.

Let's have a look at the verse while including the context:

﴿ وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ۖ ﴿٦٨﴾ ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا ۚ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۝﴾

“Your Lord inspired the bees: ‘Make hives in the mountains, in the trees and the trellises, then eat of every fruit and follow the path of your Lord submissively.’ From out of their bellies comes a drink of different color in which there is a cure for the human being. In this, there is evidence (of the truth) for the people of understanding.” (16:68-69)

When one reads the verse in a larger whole, then it becomes clear that different processes are being described; the bees build hives, then they participate in the order of nature and consume things from nature, followed by them producing honey which mankind employed at the time of the Prophet for medical purposes. The focus isn't honey or medicine; the focus is various processes located in nature, which should make us ponder and reflect over the creation. That there is a Creator, and an Organizer followed by other ideas in other verses that He ﷻ didn't create us in vain, that we will be taken to account for what we do in this life, etc.

The purpose isn't to fix the medical industry to honey and rejoice over honey might being a cure for some diseases. Thus, some Muslim circles are entirely mistaken in their understanding of the role of Revelation and the subject medicine, which is why they are stuck in the past and won't move an inch away from using honey as medicine, exclusively.

Thus, it is imperative to understand the fallacy of the idea of 'the medicine of the Prophet.'

Ibn Qayyim draws an analogy in his description between the Qur'an can only heal what people have in their hearts, and the medicine of the Prophet can only heal diseases if one's heart is in the right place.

On a rhetorical level, this might sound like a beautiful and valid notion. However, an analogy cannot be employed as proof; it can merely be used to explain an idea. I.e., if this were actually the case, then the analogy would be a great explanation as to how this works, but under no circumstances can the analogy be employed as an argument for things being like this.

Allah sent down the disease along with a cure

The Islamic texts reassure us that there is a cure for every disease, and they encourage us to research medicine to seek the remedies:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مَا أُنْزِلَ اللَّهُ دَاءً إِلَّا أُنْزِلَ لَهُ شِفَاءً

"Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet said: "There is no disease that Allah has created, except that He also has created its treatment." (al-Bukhari)

The interesting part is, however, that some Muslims don't search any further after finding a cure which, allegedly or correctly, works. This is interesting because in principle we might find a better treatment with time. If honey was an effective cure to one or more diseases more than 1000 years ago, then nothing rules out that we might find newer and better treatments today, as nothing in the narrations suggest that there is only one cure for each disease.

In the following, we'll have a closer look at some of the misunderstandings found in different Muslim circles.

Dates protect against poison and magic

Several narrations inform us that the Messenger of ﷺ preferred to eat dates, and also that he ﷺ recommended the Muslims to eat them.

One of the narrations have been misunderstood by some Muslims who translate it as follows:

أَخْبَرَنِي عَامِرُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبِي يَقُولُ، سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ
" مَنْ أَصْطَبَحَ بِسَبْعِ تَمَرَاتٍ عَجْوَةٍ لَمْ يَضُرَّهُ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ سَمٌّ وَلَا سِحْرٌ "

“Amir Bin Sa’d narrated that his father said: I heard the Messenger of Allah say: ‘Whoever takes seven ‘Ajwa dates in the morning will not be affected by magic or poison on that day.’” (al-Bukhari)

From this narration, they understand that if one eats a particular kind of dates, then one is protected against poison and magic. This is an absurd understanding of the narration.

Dates are a rich source of phenol antioxidants and help against toxins in the body; this is the meaning of سَمٌ samm – not poison.

As for the term *sibr*, it’s a very ambiguous word, and linguistically speaking it’s associated with the weakness and dependencies of the body, both the fact that we need to eat and drink, but also the different vulnerabilities and addictions characterizing created beings. It also has various connotations associated with something hidden, for instance, lungs. If we look in some of the interpretations of verse 25:7, we find different explanations of the word مسحور mas-hur:

Az-Zamakhshari writes in his *tafsir*, *al-Kashshaaf*:

{ مَسْحُورًا } سحر فغلب على عقله أو ذا سحر، وهو الرثة عنوا أنه بشر لا ملك

“(Mashur) Magic, so his mind has been defeated, or the one who has *sibr*, and it’s lungs, i.e., a man and not an angel.”

Al-Baydawi writes in his *tafsir*, *Anwar al-Tanzil*:

{ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا } سحر فغلب على عقله، وقيل ذا سحر وهو الرئة أي بشراً لا ملكاً
 “(Nothing but a *mas-hur* man) Magic, so his mind has been defeated, and it is said the one who has *sibr*, and that is lungs, i.e., a man and not an angel.”

As-Suyuti and Mahali write in *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*:

أي ما تتبعون إلا رجلاً مغلوباً على عقله بالسحر، وقيل إذا سحر، وهي الرئة أي بشراً له رئة لا ملكاً

“I.e., You follow nothing but a man whose mind has been defeated by magic, and it is said; if *sibr*, and that is lungs, i.e., human beings have lungs, angels don't.”

As-Samarqandi writes in his *tafsir*:

{ وَقَالَ الظَّالِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ } يعني: ما تطيعون يا أصحاب محمد { إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا } يعني: مغلوب العقل ويقال: مسحوراً أي مخلوقاً لأن الذي يكون مخلوقاً يكون حياته بالمعالجة بالأسكل والشرب فيسمى مسحوراً

“(And the wrongdoers say, you follow) i.e., You, O companions of Muhammads, obey (but a *mas-hur* man), i.e., a defeated mind. Also, it is said: *Mashur*, i.e., created (*makhluq*), because the one who is created, his life is associated with food and drink, so, therefore, he is called *mas-hur*.”

Dates are good to eat when breaking the fast, as they are an excellent source of energy, and in that sense, they reduce weakness, i.e., fatigue.

So, if we wish to translate the narration correctly, then it says something like:

خَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدٌ، أَخْبَرَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ بَشِيرٍ أَبُو بَكْرٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا هَاشِمُ بْنُ هَاشِمٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عَامِرُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبِي يَقُولُ، سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ مَنْ أَصْطَبَحَ بِسَبْعِ تَمَرَاتٍ عَجْوَةٍ لَمْ يَضُرَّهُ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ سَمٌّ وَلَا سِحْرٌ

“Amir Bin Sa’d narrated: I heard my father say: ‘I heard the Messenger of Allah say: ‘Whoever takes seven ‘Ajwa dates in the morning will not be affected by fatigue or toxins that day.’” (al-Bukhari)

This is yet another statement made by the Prophet ﷺ in his capacity as a human being, i.e., it's not part of Revelation.

One wing of a fly has poison, and the other wing has the antidote

Most people get annoyed by finding insects in their food and beverages. However, there is a narration about what one should do, if one finds a fly in one's glass:

حَدَّثَنَا خَالِدُ بْنُ مَخْلَدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ بِلَالٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عُثْبَةُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عُثْبَةُ بْنُ حُنَيْنٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - يَقُولُ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا وَقَعَ الذُّبَابُ فِي شَرَابٍ أَحَدِكُمْ فَلْيَغْمِسْهُ، ثُمَّ لِيَنْزِعْهُ، فَإِنَّ فِي إِحْدَى جَنَاحَيْهِ دَاءٌ وَالْأُخْرَى شِفَاءٌ

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet said: ‘If a house fly falls in the drink of anyone of you, he should dip it (in the drink) and take it out, for one of its wings has a disease, and the other has the cure for the disease.’” (al-Bukhari)

Chain of narration: Khalid Bin Makhlad – Sulaiman Bin Bilal – 'Utbah Bin Muslim – 'Ubaid Bin Hunain – Abu Hurairah

We've already discussed the problems with narrations only narrated by Abu Hurairah.

This narration is controversial due to its absurdity. Some Muslims reacted by rejecting it outright, as they couldn't associate such an absurd statement with the Prophet ﷺ. Others tried to (mis)interpret it to deal with arrogance and humility; one would learn to be humble by dipping a fly in one's beverage, throw the fly out, and afterward drink the beverage.

In light of that, the Prophet ﷺ doesn't express himself in the capacity of a prophet with regards to technology and medicine; then it would be understood as a human error from his part. So, should we eventually discover, that there actually is something rational about dipping a fly in one's beverage, then the Prophet ﷺ in his capacity as a human being had some insight in some useful medical knowledge.

The point is, regardless of flies have this ability or not, then the topic isn't related to Revelation, rendering it utterly irrelevant to the Islamic message. The claim, however, is absurd enough to justify rejecting it as a fabrication or a misunderstanding.

Drink camel urine

There are narrations about the Prophet ﷺ recommending camel urine for medical purposes:

عَنْ أَنَسٍ أَنَّ نَاسًا، اجْتَمَعُوا فِي الْمَدِينَةِ فَأَمَرَهُمُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يَلْحَقُوا بِرَاعِيهِ - يَعْنِي الْإِبِلَ - فَيَشْرَبُوا مِنْ أَلْبَانِهَا وَأُبْوَالِهَا، فَلَحَقُوا بِرَاعِيهِ فَشَرَبُوا مِنْ أَلْبَانِهَا وَأُبْوَالِهَا، حَتَّى صَلَحَتْ أَبْدَانُهُمْ فَقَتَلُوا الرَّاعِيَّ وَسَاقُوا الْإِبِلَ، فَبَلَغَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَبَعَثَ فِي طَلَبِهِمْ، فَجِيءَ بِهِمْ فَقَطَعَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَأَرْجُلَهُمْ، وَسَمَرَ أَعْيُنَهُمْ قَالَ قَتَادَةُ فَحَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ سِيرِينَ أَنَّ ذَلِكَ كَانَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْزَلَ الْحُدُودُ

“Anas narrated: The climate of Medina did not suit some people, so the Prophet ordered them to follow his shepherd, i.e., his camels, and drink their milk and urine (as a medicine). So, they followed the shepherd, that is the camels, and drank their milk and urine till their bodies became healthy. Then they killed the shepherd and drove away the camels. When the news reached the Prophet, he sent some people in their pursuit. When they were brought, he cut their hands and feet, and their eyes were branded with heated pieces of iron. Qatadah said: ‘Muhammad Bin Sirin told me that this was before the revelation of the laws of punishment (hudud).’” (al-Bukhari, other variants; at-Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah & an-Nasa’i)

He gave this recommendation in his capacity as a human being employing the knowledge of his time about medicine – not in his position as a prophet, which is why it doesn't have any relation to Revelation. So, if it some day proves to be ineffective, it won't have any impact on the Islamic message, and if it eventually proves to be efficient, it still won't have any effect.

Thus, there is nothing wrong in rejecting to drink camel urine, to refrain from recommending anyone to do so, and to develop alternative medicine to camel urine, *al-hamdu lillah*.

Nigella seed oil (Black seed oil)

Quite many natural remedies were known in the time of the Prophet. One of them was Nigella seeds, which are used to produce oil from today. In some Muslim circles, the nigella seed oil is the first thing one is given when ill.

Initially, it's relevant to keep in mind, that the Prophet ﷺ recommended nigella seed in his capacity of being a human being 1400 years ago; the medical industry has evolved tremendously since then. Furthermore, it is possible for him ﷺ to be mistaken in matters related to medicine and the natural sciences, as they aren't in the scope of Revelation. However, the recommendation by the Prophet ﷺ is rather clear and also well-known:

أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ أَخْبَرَهُمَا أَنَّهُ، سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ فِي الْحَبَّةِ السَّوْدَاءِ شِفَاءً
مِنْ كُلِّ دَاءٍ إِلَّا السَّامَ قَالَ ابْنُ شِهَابٍ وَالسَّامُ الْمَوْتُ، وَالْحَبَّةُ السَّوْدَاءُ الشُّونِيزُ

“Abu Hurairah narrated: I heard Allah’s Messenger saying: “There is healing in black cumin for all diseases except death.” (al-Bukhari)

It should, however, be mentioned that this recommendation shouldn't be understood comprehensively, as some Muslims do.

In the Arabic language, one can employ rhetorical means for various reasons. In the case of this narration, one needs to understand a particular rhetorical mean; *al-mubalaghah*, i.e., hyperboles.

In English, a hyperbole is described as *a way of speaking or writing that makes someone or something sound much bigger, better, smaller, worse, more unusual, etc., than they are.*

Ar-Rummani in the book *Nukat fi I'jaz al-Qur'an* gives some examples of hyperboles found in the Koran:

﴿وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ﴾

“and they shall not enter Paradise before the camel passes through the eye of a needle” (TQM 7:40)

﴿ فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّى رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا ﴾

“When your Lord showed Himself to the mountain, it crumbled” (TQM 7:143)

﴿ وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ﴾

“And your Lord and the angels came rows followed by rows” (TQM 89:22)

Where He ﷻ expressed that the verses of the Qur'an came as if He ﷻ himself came which magnifies the idea.

Another example:

﴿ فَأَتَى اللَّهُ بُنْيَانَهُمْ مِنَ الْقَوَاعِدِ ﴾

“But Allah came to the foundation of their building” (TQM 16:26)

Which means that He ﷻ used His power described in an enhanced way by saying that He ﷻ Himself came.

﴿ قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَابِدِينَ ﴾

“Say: If the Most Merciful had a son, I would be the first to worship him” (TQM 43:81) – End of quote from the work of ar-Rummani.

With hyperboles in mind, it's easy to understand that of course nigella seeds aren't a cure to literally everything.

The relevant part in this topic of our examination is that this recommendation by the Prophet ﷺ is in his capacity as a human being and not as a prophet, which is why the advice isn't part of the Revelation.

Hijamah

Hijamah, cupping, is an ancient treatment of various diseases. Its origin is not known. However, it was practiced in Egypt in the year 1500 BC after which it spread out to Greece, where Hippocrates, Galen, and Herodotus highly recommended it. In China, it was also accepted and widespread around the year 285 BC. Cupping was further spread out in East-Europe in the Balkans and Bulgaria, and sources show that the North-American Indians also employed cupping.

Hijamah, cupping, is described, like Nigella seeds, as a cure to all diseases in narrations from the Prophet ﷺ. In this case, it's also an exaggeration in the guise of a hyperbole, *al-mubalaghah*. And it's still the Prophet ﷺ, in his capacity as a human being, who recommends it as an effective treatment based on the available knowledge of medicine in his time:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنِ احْتَجَمَ لِسِنْعِ عَشْرَةٍ وَتِسْعِ عَشْرَةٍ
وَاحِدَى وَعِشْرِينَ كَانَ شِفَاءً مِنْ كُلِّ دَاءٍ

“Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘If anyone has himself cupped on the 17th, 19th and 21st it will be a remedy for every disease.’” (Abu Dawud)

A few narrations explain that the Prophet ﷺ was ordered by angels to order the Islamic nation to perform *hijamah*:

عَنِ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ لَيْلَةٍ، أُسْرِيَ بِهِ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَمُرَّ عَلَى
مَلَإٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِلَّا أَمَرُوهُ أَنْ مُرَّ أُمَّتَكَ بِالْحِجَامَةِ

“Ibn Mas’ud said: ‘The Messenger of Allah narrated about the Night of Isra’, saying that he did not pass an assembly of angels except that they ordered him: ‘Order cupping among your Ummah.’” (Tirmidhi)

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ مَا مَرَرْتُ لَيْلَةً أُسْرِيَ بِي بِمَلَإٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ إِلَّا كَلَّمَهُمْ يَقُولُ لِي
عَلَيْكَ يَا مُحَمَّدُ بِالْحِجَامَةِ

“Ibn ‘Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘On the night on which I was taken on the Night Journey (Isra’), I did not pass by any group of angels, but all of them said to me: ‘O Muhammad, you should use cupping.’” (Ibn Majah)

أَنَّ بَنِي مَالِكٍ، يَقُولُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مَا مَرَرْتُ لَيْلَةً أُسْرِيَ بِي بِمَلَإٍ إِلَّا قَالُوا يَا مُحَمَّدُ مُرَّ أُمَّتَكَ
بِالْحِجَامَةِ

“Anas Bin Malik said that the Messenger of Allah said: ‘On the night on which I was taken on the Night Journey (Isra’), I did not pass by any group (of angels), but they said to me: ‘O Muhammad, tell your nation to use cupping.’” (Ibn Majah)

When one reads these three narrations, one immediately associates *hijamah* with Revelation. The three narrations are, however, weak (da'eef), which is why they can't be used, and we then return to the conclusion that the Prophet ﷺ recommended *hijamah* in his capacity as a human being and not as a prophet.

There is a narration in the collection of *as-Suyuti, Jami' as-Saghir*, that as-Suyuti himself classified as acceptable (hasan):

ما مررت ليلة أُسري بي بملا، من الملائكة إلا قالوا: يا محمد مُر أُمَّتَكَ بِالحِجَامَةِ

“(Anas Bin Malik narrated that the Messenger of Allah said): ‘I didn't pass by a group of angels on the Night Journey who didn't say to me: ‘O Muhammad, order your nation to perform *hijamah*.’” (Jami' as-Saghir)

And there is another variant of this narration in the collection of al-Haithami, *Majma' az-Zawa'id*:

ما مررت ليلة أُسري بي على ملا من الملائكة إلا أمروني بالحِجَامَةِ

“(Malik Bin Sa'sa' al-Ansari narrated that the Messenger of Allah said): ‘On the Night Journey, I didn't pass by a group of angels without them ordering me to perform *hijamah*.’” (az-Zawa'id)

There are, however, two significant problems with these two narrations:

- 1) They aren't to be found with authentic chains of narration in the six primary *hadith* collections.
- 2) They conflict with reality and the mind.

In itself, it's not a problem that a narration isn't included in one of the six primary *hadith* collections. In this situation, however, it's problematic that the narrations with differing wordings are included with weak chains of narration in the collections of at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah and classified as acceptable in the collection of al-Haithami, *Majma' az-Zawa'id* since the latter is known for being lenient with regards to narrations. As-Suyuti didn't mention the chain of narration in his *Jami' as-Saghir*, he merely wrote his evaluation.

Both descriptions contain a description of how all the angels that the Prophet ﷺ meets on the Night Journey without exception exhort him ﷺ to do *hijamah* and also order the Islamic nation to do *hijamah*. I.e., the status and importance of *hijamah* are emphasized by all the angels which the Prophet ﷺ meets on the Night Journey. How can he ﷺ then refrain from telling his companions and the Muslims in general about the importance of *hijamah*, and about all the angels emphasizing the significance of *hijamah* to him ﷺ to the extent that none of the scholars who wrote the six main hadith collections met anyone to authentically include the narrations in their collections?

It doesn't make any sense that a Messenger doesn't consider it a priority even though all the angels he met emphasized the importance of it. All the angels, allegedly, thought that *hijamah* is so crucial for the Islamic nation that all of them without any exception pointed out that he ﷺ should order the Islamic nation to do it. But, either he ﷺ disagreed with them, or it never happened, as he ﷺ never mentioned it in gatherings, during Friday sermons, or at other occasions where it was possible for him ﷺ to share the urgent message with the Islamic nation. The Night Journey occurred one year before hijrah, i.e., the Prophet ﷺ had 11 years to inform the Muslims about *hijamah*, and about how all the angels had emphasized the importance of *hijamah* and how they had exhorted him ﷺ to order the Islamic nation to do *hijamah*. However, he ﷺ refrained from doing so except by, allegedly, informing a few individuals? It doesn't make any sense, which is why these narrations should be rejected.

The idea about angels recommending *hijamah* is absurd based on the mind and the reality when looking at scientific studies of cupping.

In 2011 Myeong Soo Lee, Jong-In Kim, and Eduard Ernst undertook a literature study of systematic literature studies which they published with the title *Is Cupping an Effective Treatment? An Overview of Systematic Reviews*. They concluded that it might be plausible that cupping can be effective with regards to reducing pain, whereas there isn't sufficient evidence to prove the effect of cupping in other areas. Most studies with a positive attitude towards the effect of cupping are of poor quality with a high risk of bias, which is why even the idea of cupping being efficient with regards to reducing pain is questionable.

Conclusion

Medicine belongs to the domain of science and technology, which isn't the theme of Revelation, which is why the statements of the Prophet regarding medicine shouldn't be understood as Revelation. The Muslims should instead focus on building industries which can build and sustain an efficient medical industry.

Conclusion

Nobody except Allah ﷻ knows the future and nobody can contact or control spirits or Jinn.

Magic in a supernatural form doesn't exist. Those Muslims who believe that magic in a supernatural form does exist, they employ misinterpretations of Koranic verses pushing superstition onto the verses and thereby confirm superstition. It's a circular argumentation which invalidates the argumentation. There are some weak narrations which, wrongfully, passed through the eye of the needle, causing some Muslims to believe in magic. However, weak narrations should be rejected; especially when they are as weak as in this case. The natural kinds of magic are eloquence, tricks, deception, and manipulation, which, combined with superstition, can cause a psychological effect.

Jinn exist, and they whisper to us, but that's the only thing they can do. Due to a misunderstanding of narrations a lot of myths and superstitions about the abilities of Jinn have been confirmed, especially the idea of Jinn-possession which rests on a misinterpretation of Koranic verses, weak narrations, and a lack of knowledge concerning psychiatry and psychological disorders. One of the consequences of the stigma as a result of superstition is that people with mental disorders postpone seeking help until their condition deteriorates significantly. The superstition concerning Jinn-possession maintains the research in psychiatry and psychology at an unacceptable level.

The Evil Eye is actually a reference to envy in the scope of the laws of nature. Some Muslims, wrongfully, misinterpreted Koranic verses and narrations as confirmation of the idea of the Evil Eye because they pushed superstition onto the text and confirmed superstition thereby.

The idea of *karamah* after the era of Revelation can lead to hopelessness and antipathy towards Islamic practice. It can be exploited by cults and sects to provide their leaders with a supernatural status.

The Prophet ﷺ employed the knowledge of medicine of his time. It's a misunderstanding of the role of Revelation to fix the medical development to the time of the Prophet and to means which he ﷺ

recommended in his capacity as a human being in a topic where it was possible for him ٢٨٤ to be mistaken.

Afterword

What happens now? The following is not divination; it's merely a qualified guess based on many years of experience with debates.

It's reasonable to think that there will be an outcry amongst the Muslims who are raised with superstition, and some of them might engage in character assassination and throwing around demeaning labels.

One can imagine, that even before the completion of this book, i.e., even before reading the book, they'll launch campaigns of character assassination on for instance the social media, which isn't justifiable, since one can't reasonably oppose to something, one doesn't know about.

It is expected and in no way surprising, as these circles aren't used to debate based on evidence, i.e., they're used to debating without really considering arguments. It's one of the obvious disadvantages of being tied to authorities and having a sectarian approach towards Islam. This approach doesn't allow one to think of counter-arguments; instead, the focus becomes character assassination as the primary strategy. If the focus for these circles is evidence, then they will read the arguments in the book and rebut them.

It's somewhat similar to the example of rain dance. If one criticized the idea of rain dance in front of a people who sincerely believed in the concept, then they too would respond with character assassination instead of argumentation; they would praise their beloved ones, their respected scholars and ancestors, who confirmed the idea of rain dance despite the absurdity of it.

The next step that can be expected is that some of these Muslims shall re-use some of the arguments or so-called evidence which have already been treated in the book – simply because they either haven't read the book or haven't bothered to fully grasp the treatment of these arguments in the book. This isn't justifiable on their behalf.

The next step that can be expected is that these circles will mention some completely irrelevant pseudo-arguments which they will try to

portrait as decisive arguments, and a large portion of them will leave the debate 'with the glory intact' – at least this is how they will make it appear in their own perception and the perception of their 'allies.'

After a while, it will most likely become calm, and these circles will pretend that this book doesn't exist – collective and selective amnesia. Some of them will, however, accept the arguments presented in this book.

Others from the target audience of the book will most likely welcome this book and recommend it to others, as it is a godsend on their part – and this makes the trouble worthwhile as an author; to know that one has contributed in a positive way to enlightenment and correct understanding ☺

In this book, there is an appeal to professionals in the mental health care service: Either cooperate with religious healers and Muslim leaders to help the patients and in the long run getting rid of superstition – if you can vouch for this approach. Alternatively, and this is the approach, I would prefer, contribute to exterminating superstition once and for all; if it's not possible to eradicate it, then at least minimize it, as superstition can have a lot of severe consequences for numerous patients if they don't receive the necessary treatment due to superstition.

In this book, there is also an appeal to Muslim scholars, leaders, and professionals in the mental care services: Break the silence and stand up. Please don't give in to the pressure, and don't be exhausted by the thought that it's a long process to remove confusions about superstition. It's a lot easier to give a superstitious person an amulet or make him, or her recite something from the Qur'an sometimes than to actually treat their problems in depth – but you know, this isn't the correct way. I shall end my appeal to you with the best of words, the words of Allah:

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

"And do not mix up the truth with the falsehood, nor hide the truth while you know (it)." (2:42)

My personal conviction is that superstition is a symptom of a corrupted way of thinking; and it can't be fixed, as long as various leaders support and Islamize it.

In this book, there is also an appeal to Muslims in general: Superstition destroys the lives of many people, makes them appear completely irrational, scares people away from Islamic practice and in some cases even from Islam itself. We have a collective responsibility to present Islam, as Islam is; without pollution, complications, and obstacles.

This book should actually give rise to an increase in the trust in the science of *hadith* and to a more balanced approach instead of blindly accepting narrations exclusively based on their classification or rejecting narrations because they don't conform to what one feels is rational. Throughout the book, we've seen how the science of *hadith* clarifies that the texts which support and confirm superstition and myths actually are weak and should be rejected; i.e., the science of *hadith* actually fulfills its purpose, if one is true to it and doesn't ignore procedure based on an erroneous leniency due to bias. People might deviate from the procedures for various reasons, as we've experienced throughout the book which can't be blamed on the science of *hadith*, rather than drawing attention to why the various narrations aren't durable in the given situation.

Then it should become clear that interpretations or distortions based on these employed, weak narrations aren't valid. On the other hand, we've seen examples of narrations which are classified as authentic based on their chain of narration but with problematic content due to conflicts with other texts or the reality which shows that the classification isn't sufficient.

We've also seen examples of ideas which initially doesn't seem rational. We still need to accept them, if all the conditions are met; for instance, metaphysics mixed with the explanation of physical phenomena; Jinn whispering to us in a manner which isn't defined or explained and isn't possible to measure with instruments nor is it sensed with the faculty of hearing. However, it still has a relationship with inspiring thoughts in the human mind. Likewise, it's the same with regards to the effect of *du'a*; initially, nothing rational confirms its effect, however, since the

Islamic texts concerning its effect are conclusive, we have to accept as an undisputable fact that *du'a* has an impact even though it's incomprehensible for the mind.

I hope this book will be a help to others to find the correct balance so they won't reject ideas which should be accepted and won't accept ideas which should be rejected. As mentioned in the foreword, this book is my attempt to provide others with an understanding enabling them to navigate through the Islamic literature and sort the wheat from the chaff and thus hold on to the wheat.

Planned projects at Forlaget al-Hidayah

In our attempt to accommodate a future need which might already be on the rise, some of the planned future publications shall, bi idhnillahi ta'ala, deal with the following topics:

- The Sunnah of the Prophet – that Allah ﷻ preserved it, however, maybe not in the manner many Muslims believe.
- The theory of Evolution – How should Muslims deal with it, an alternative to a black and white understanding; avoiding the various rational, logical, and scientific pitfalls of the proponents of this theory without rejecting Islamic ideas.
- A publication on comparative *fiqh* – which aims to clarify the balanced approach without becoming relativistic or absolutistic.
- A publication dealing the sickening, fanatic sectarianism which has plagued and divided the Muslim community throughout centuries.

Suggestions on publications are most welcome at info@al-hidayah.dk or <https://www.facebook.com/forlagetalhidayah/> the Facebook page belonging to the publishing house, Forlaget al-hidayah.

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